

# gay COMMUNITY NEWS

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FOR FIFTEEN YEARS, THE LESBIAN AND GAY WEEKLY

## Feds charge cops in gay club shakedowns

*Failure to pay extortion to Boston police was costly, says a former manager of the Loft*

By Kim Westheimer

BOSTON — A federal grand jury has brought a fifty-eight count indictment against three current and four former members of the Boston Police Department. Nineteen of the fifty-eight counts involve extortion from gay establishments. Sources close to the situation say they expect many more officers, and at least one member of the Boston Fire Department will be indicted before the FBI investigation is completed.

The Nov. 10 indictment resulted from a six-year federal investigation prompted by complaints about police officers who solicited bribes and harassed owners of gay establishments.

According to the indictment, the seven police officers extorted substantial amounts of cash and property from bar managers and owners. In return the police officers offered to overlook violations, provide police protection and not harass the clubs. In total, the officers illegally collected more than \$200,000, according to the indictment.

### Pay-offs from gay bars

Joseph D'Onofrio, the former manager of the gay after-hours club, the Loft, said gay bars are "sitting ducks" for corrupt police officers. "Gay establishments are traditionally...the easiest victims," said D'Onofrio. "No one will come to the aid of gay people. Most people would rather believe police officers than gay people."

Joseph McGowan, a partner of the gay bar, The 1270, gave at least \$8,200 to five police officers between December of 1982 and August of 1985, according to the indictment. McGowan told reporters at a Nov. 10 press conference that he was proud to have cooperated with the FBI in their investigation. McGowan's conversations with the accused police officers were reportedly secretly recorded for the FBI. McGowan would neither confirm nor deny these reports.

Investigators also allege police officer Matthew Kilroe blocked a Boston Licensing Commission hearing regarding an alleged rape of a woman at the 1270.

McGowan denied that a rape ever happened at the 1270. "Rapes don't happen in gay bars," said McGowan. The 1270 never had any problems with the licensing board until the investigation of police corruption commenced, said McGowan. Since that time, the club received a one-week suspension from the licensing board. Currently the club is appealing a two-week suspension.

Two former police officers, Francis X. Sheehan and Thomas Connolly, allegedly extorted \$800 from Charles Trafton, who ran an illegal after-hours club at 124 St. Botolph Street. Trafton, 72, told *GCN* the club started informally in his small basement apartment in the mid-1950s. At the

club's inception, Trafton did not charge money for drinks. But as up to thirty people began to frequent his apartment, he started to sell drinks.

In the mid-1960s police began raiding the club on a regular basis, said Trafton. Each time the club was raided Trafton was arrested, jailed for about an hour and released on bail. He paid fines ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 for operating the club.

In the 1970s Trafton said Sheehan and Connolly, both of whom have been indicted in this case, suggested that he give them \$100 a month to stop the raids. Trafton paid the officers for approximately eight months until his club was raided again by other officers. Trafton said he stopped paying Sheehan and Connolly because they couldn't guarantee a halt to the raids.

"There was never any animosity," said Trafton. "A year or so ago Sheehan called me up and asked if I had an empty room [in the building he owns] for a friend of his."

Trafton said he became aware of the investigation when he was approached by the FBI "six or seven months ago." "I was living a quiet retired life in my elder years," said Trafton. "[The payoffs were] something I put behind me — never thought to be brought up again. I just wish they'd kept their mouths shut so I wouldn't be involved. At my age I don't need the inconvenience."

Stephen Zaglakas, the creditor in possession of Skippers, a gay bar no longer in operation, also paid off officers, according to the indictment. Zaglakas refuted that claim. "I don't know what the hell's going on. I had nothing to do with [any] payoffs," said Zaglakas. "My lawyers advised me not to talk to anyone until the trials are over."

Norman Chaletzky, the owner of the now-closed gay bar, the Boston Eagle, and a partner in the 1270, paid at least \$3,000 to officers, according to the indictment. Chaletzky could not be reached for comment.

### The price of not paying

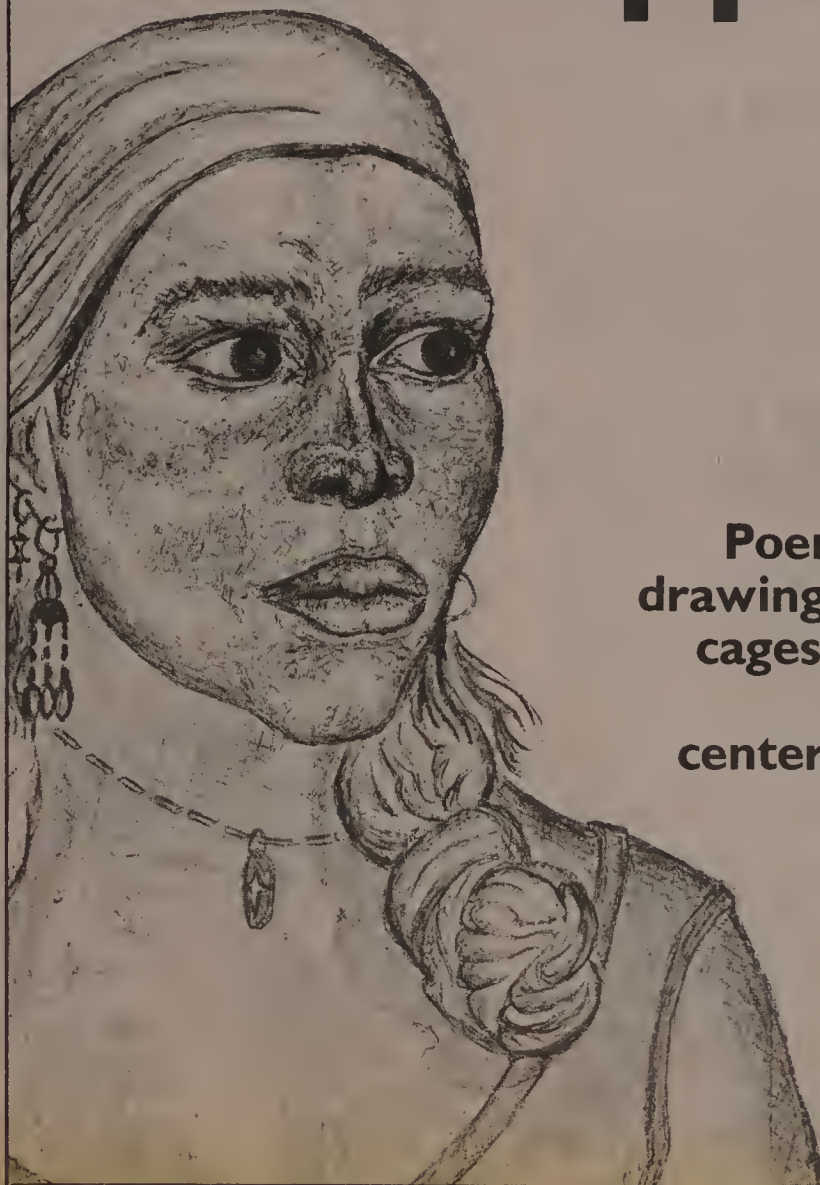
The Loft, which operated from 1977 to 1985, was plagued by police harassment shortly after opening. The club was frequently raided by the now-defunct Boston Vice Squad.

Two of those who were indicted, John Carey and John McCormack, were part of the vice squad and took part in the Loft raids. According to D'Onofrio, who was a partner and manager of the Loft, nearly all of the men who were indicted harassed the Loft at one time. D'Onofrio identified Sheehan as the mastermind behind the operation.

During the last Loft raid, which took

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## Tongue Taunted Nipples



Poems and  
drawings from  
cages in this  
week's  
centerspread

## Gay man wins custody of lover's son

*A Calif. court rejects fundamentalist mother's attempt to keep Brian Batey from living with his deceased father's lover*

By Chris Bull

SAN DIEGO, CA — In a decision hailed by gay rights advocates as an important "first" in custody battles, a Superior Court judge awarded custody of a 16-year-old male to his late father's gay lover.

Judge Judith McConnell said that Craig Corbett would provide Brian Batey the "stable and wholesome environment" his mother, Betty Lou Batey, could not provide. McConnell cited the youth's strong desire to live with Corbett and his mother's failure to provide education or counseling during the five-year custody battle as factors in her decision. Three experts testified that Batey's mother is an unfit parent because she denied him the emotional support he needed. The woman promised she will not appeal the decision. "We're leaving it to whatever Brian wants," she told the *New York Times*.

Batey's mother, a fundamentalist Christian, kidnapped him from his father five years ago, hiding for almost two years before surrendering to authorities in Denver. In 1984 she was acquitted of child stealing charges but the court declared her "emotionally unstable."

In June the court granted temporary custody to Corbett after his lover, Frank Batey, died of AIDS.

"This is one of the first major recognitions of gay relationships," said Paula Ettlebrick, staff attorney for the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. "The court actually awarded the boy to a non-biological parent, implicitly recognizing his important role in bringing him up. Had he merely been a friend, the court would not have given him custody." Ettlebrick said the decision sets an important precedent for family custody battles, particularly in the emerging debate over artificial insemination for lesbian couples, where one partner is not a biological parent.

Roberta Achtenberg, legal director of the

Lesbian Rights Project in San Francisco, told *GCN* the case has psychological importance, but little legal import. She said the case is a good example of fair treatment of gay parents which would send a positive message to other judges as well as to the gay and lesbian community. Because gay men are often misrepresented as child molesters, courts have been reluctant to grant custody to them, according to Achtenberg. But Frank Batey's excellent record as a parent quickly dispelled that assumption, she said. Corbett, as a third-party parent, was particularly vulnerable to accusations of sexual interest in the boy. Achtenberg said she was also pleased the court rejected the claim that Batey would get AIDS from living in the same household with his father and Corbett.

Achtenberg stressed, however, that the case did not have direct, legal precedent because the circumstances of the case are "extremely rare." For the case to be decided in favor of a third-party, non-biological parent, the youth would have to be at least fourteen and express a strong desire to live with the third-party parent. In addition biological parent would have to be a "proven detriment to the child" and the third-party parent would have to prove to be a good parent without a doubt in the mind of the court. These circumstances rarely coincide, said Achtenberg.

McConnell's decision never mentions homosexuality, despite Batey's mother's contention that it should be the primary issue. Carol Sobel, staff attorney for the Southern California Civil Liberties Union and Corbett's attorney, told *GCN* that "it is a wonderful testament to the decision that the judge only talked about two people and the best interest of the child." Sobel said Batey, who is straight, made a very good impression on the court. "Brian said very clearly that he loved these men who had nur-

Continued on page 11

## Quote of the week

“Don’t worry, I’m going to outlive those bastards.”

— *Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall recently reassured a meeting of lawyers and judges that President Reagan would not have the chance to appoint a conservative to take his place on the court.*

*Marshall, who is 79 years old, has been ill in recent years and was hospitalized last summer for a blood clot. He was an active civil rights attorney before joining the court.*

## It wasn’t all in her mind

BOSTON — A judge here recently granted a new trial to a woman who lost her 1987 suit against the Harvard Community Health Plan and the attending physician who allegedly failed to treat her for AIDS, according to *Sojourner*.

Elizabeth Ramos developed symptoms of AIDS in 1985. Although they knew Ramos was HIV-positive, doctors told her that her symptoms were a result of AIDS anxiety and referred her to a psychiatrist. Doctors later suggested hospitalization in a psychiatric unit when her condition became worse. She finally ended up in Boston City Hospital, where she was diagnosed as having pneumocystic pneumonia.

The Harvard Plan refused reimbursement for medical expenses, because Ramos’ records suggested that her symptoms derived from anxiety.

In July, a jury ruled in favor of the Plan and the physician, Dr. Kenneth Bernstein.

A new judge accepted Ramos’ lawyers’ argument that the jury’s finding was “against the weight of the evidence.” The judge rejected a new suit against the Plan, but accepted the request for a new trial against Bernstein.

□Marc Stein

## Gay palimony award a first

SAN FRANCISCO — Jim Short was awarded over \$2.8 million in the first successful same-sex palimony suit in the United States, according to the San Francisco *Sentinel*.

Short, a 57-year-old bank clerk, won \$1.785 million in compensatory damages and \$500,000 in punitive damages for breach of an oral contract. Short’s attorney argued that the couple had agreed to “share their lives together and everything they acquired.”

Short’s lover of 19 years, real estate developer Charles Gale, had refused to share their joint investments following their breakup in 1983.

□Marc Stein

## Feinstein strikes again

SAN FRANCISCO — Mayor Dianne Feinstein has called for mandatory AIDS testing of all inmates in San Francisco’s city jails, according to the *Bay Area Reporter* (B.A.R.). “San Francisco must show the same concern and caring leadership in protecting the rights of the uninfected” as it has shown for people with AIDS, Feinstein wrote in a letter to the city Health Commission. Feinstein supported her statements by citing a six-page, single-spaced document from “Louise Anonymous.” Some of Feinstein’s borrowed comments included, “Why are we pretending this disease isn’t insidiously infiltrating the city. Some of my friends don’t even want to visit S.F. anymore. They say...the city is haunted.”

B.A.R.’s coverage cited the largest federal study done on AIDS transmission which put the transmission rate in San Francisco during 1987 below one percent. A University of California — Berkeley study charting AIDS in 19 neighborhoods in San Francisco since 1984 also reported that transmission has dropped to “near zero.”

Feinstein’s proposal, similar to legislation proposed by state Senator John Doolittle (R — Folsom), would have to be implemented by three city institutions which oppose mandatory testing — the Health Commission, the Department of Public Health, and the

Sherriff’s office. Both the Director of Health and the Sherriff have “serious questions about the advisability of this proposal.” They also pointed out that mandatory AIDS prevention education already is occurring in San Francisco jails.

□Joan Doyle

## Hong Kong happenings

HONG KONG — The Hong Kong Ten Percent Club, founded earlier this year, and the only active gay liberation organization in Asia outside of Japan, is seeking assistance and support from more experienced groups and individuals.

The Club recently lost their primary organizer and most experienced member, Alan Li, who returned to Toronto and the Gay Asians of Toronto group. Holding the Club together now are Julian Chan, Keith Wong and Joe Chan and 11 other core committee members.

In the past six months, the group has concentrated on law reform, which is once again before the legislative council in Hong Kong. The group will appreciate funds, resources and other support from friends around the world. Letters of support and publications for their library may be sent to the Hong Kong Ten Percent Club, P.O. Box 72243, Kowloon Central Post Station, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

□John Hubert

## Girl wrestler pins school officials

MILWAUKEE, WI — After a year of sitting on the bench, Billie Jo Mann, 14, has won a battle with school officials who barred her from wrestling for her Kenosha Junior High School team. Officials decided not to fight Mann’s suit because a 1978 case involving young women basketball players set a precedent “that schools must let girls play on boys’ teams if no comparable girls’ program is available.”

Billie Jo’s desire to wrestle was a problem for Kenosha’s district athletic director, Glen McCullough, according to the *Chicago Tribune*. McCullough expressed concern that Mann would be the only female in the locker room, “alone and unattended.”

Fritz McGinnis, assistant director of the National Federation of State High School Associations, which oversees interscholastic athletics, stated that “there are a lot of holds you would not want your daughter to be a part of, like the figure 4 scissors, or a crotch lift. There’s no way a boy can wrestle a girl without having his hands all over them. That’s what it’s all about.”

Billie Jo responds to these concerns by saying, “I don’t see what the big deal is. It’s no worse than boys grabbing boys.” McGinnis also said he was concerned that there was “nothing to win and everything to lose” for a seventh grade boy not too good at wrestling who lost to a female opponent. Billie Jo replied, “I don’t think I was put on earth to boost some guy’s ego.”

□Joan Doyle

## Ameinu

SAN FRANCISCO — Ameinu (“Our People”) is an educational and support network for lesbians and gay men working professionally in the Jewish community. Founded in 1986, Ameinu includes rabbis, cantors, Jewish communal service professionals and educators. Ameinu’s second annual retreat will be held this winter. For more information contact: Ameinu, c/o Andy Rose, Congregation Sha’ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, CA 94114.

□Elizabeth Pincus

## Short submissions sought

OAKLAND, CA — Short stories by women sought for an anthology to be published by Cleis Press in May, 1988. The theme for the collection is “Unholy Alliances: the ways in which people collide, cross boundaries of sex, culture, race and lifestyles — connect across differences.” Stories should be typed double-spaced. In-

clude a SASE if you want your submission returned. The deadline is Dec. 31, 1987. Send submissions to Louise Rafkin, 1044½ 53rd St., Oakland, CA 94608.

□Joan Doyle

## Helping folks lead independent lives

BOSTON — Volunteers are needed for the Environmental Support Program at Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL). BCIL is a consumer-run agency whose aim is to assist disabled individuals in leading independent lives in the community.

Volunteers are needed on a weekly basis to help people with developmental and physical disabilities with budgeting, reading, and other clerical functions which are integral to living on one’s own. Training, supervision and travel reimbursement are provided. Contact Edith Friedman, Program Director, BCIL, 50 New Edgerly Road, Boston, MA 02115; (617) 536-2187.

□Elizabeth Pincus

## AIDS news

NEW YORK — People with AIDS Coalition publishes *Newsline*, a magazine by and for people with AIDS and AIDS-related conditions. *Newsline* comes out monthly and includes: news articles, medical updates, letters to the editor, memorials, poems, photographs, as well as an AIDS Resource Directory for the New York City area. *Newsline* is available free to PWA’s/PWArc’s and to “healthy concerned friends” for a minimum of \$20 yearly. Subscriptions available from: PWA Coalition, 236A West 19th St. No. 125, New York, NY 10011.

□Joan Doyle

## Call for submissions for les/gay health meeting

WASHINGTON, DC — The 2nd International Lesbian and Gay Health Conference & AIDS Forum has requested papers for its July 20-26, 1988 conference, to be held at Boston Park Plaza Hotel and Towers in Boston. The conference is sponsored by the George Washington University Medical School, National Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation, and the American Association of Physicians for Human Rights.

The deadline for submissions is January 15, 1988. For more information, contact Michael Weeks (202) 797-3708 or Greg Thomas (202) 994-4285.

□Marc Stein

## Ben-Shalom struggle continues

MILWAUKEE, WI — Despite winning a twelve-year struggle for reinstatement to the U.S. Army, Drill Sergeant Miriam Ben-Shalom has been advised by her lawyer that she may face further legal battles to remain in the Army as an out lesbian.

Ben-Shalom’s case arose in 1975, when she acknowledged that she was a lesbian in a major daily newspaper. At that time, Department of Defense policy barred all persons with “homosexual tendencies” from serving in the armed forces. The policy has subsequently been redefined to bar all persons who state that they are gay as well as all persons who engage in gay acts.

After District Court Judge Terrence Evans ruled that the Army’s decision violated Ben-Shalom’s free speech rights, the army stalled on her reinstatement for years. She was finally reinstated on September 12 of this year.

Now that she has been reinstated, Army spokesperson Major Greg Rixon has announced that when Ben-Shalom’s current enlistment runs out in August 1988, the Army will apply its new regulations to her, blocking her reenlistment. Ben-Shalom plans to challenge the Army again if she is not reenlisted.

Ben-Shalom said of the Army’s statement, “I am still protected by my 1980 decision, and merely because I am in the Army does not mean that I have lost freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and freedom of

association.

“Currently, all branches of the military spend, according to their own records, well in excess of \$22,000,000 a year to search out lesbians and homosexuals in the military and spend over \$375,000 in processing ‘gay’ discharges yearly. Two thousand discharges, all branches of service.... One wonders how much more they are willing to waste in an attempt to try it again.

“I pose absolutely no threat what-so-ever to my country!”

□Marc Stein

## Odd, thoughtful, issue-oriented

NEW YORK — *Avenue E*, a literary magazine, is seeking poetry, fiction and other writing for its fifth issue. Looking for work that is odd, thoughtful, issue-oriented. Lesbians, people of color and differently-abled people are especially encouraged to submit work. Submission deadline is Dec. 15. Send to *Avenue E*, Box 943, New York, NY 10009. All work should include an SASE.

□Robert Kaplan

## Get that AIDS info in the mail!

WASHINGTON, DC — Rep. Gerry Studds (D-MA) has requested a U.S. General Accounting Office investigation of the Reagan Administration’s failure to implement a congressionally-required nationwide mailing of AIDS information. Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA), chair of the House Subcommittee on Health, joined Studds in requesting the investigation.

Congress approved legislation allocating “\$20 million to finance a mass mailing of information about AIDS to every household in the nation,” as part of a supplemental appropriations bill passed by Congress in July of this year.

The administration intends instead to spend the money on “targeted” distribution of AIDS information pamphlets to state and local health agencies, YMCA’s, and selected corporations. Studds said that this would fail to meet the goal of “getting information to every household.”

“The miserable performance of our own administration, its abject failure to fulfill its public health responsibilities, now verges on criminal negligence,” Studds said.

□Marc Stein

NEWSNOTES  
COMPILED BY  
JENNIE McKNIGHT

# Reagan relents on AIDS panel appointments...

*Amid widespread criticism of his blue-ribbon AIDS panel, the president attempts to 'salvage the credibility' of the Commission by appointing two experts*

By Chris Bull

WASHINGTON, DC — To the surprise of AIDS activists, the Reagan administration named two well-qualified health officials to the Presidential Commission on AIDS.

Dr. Beny Primme, executive director of the Addiction Research and Treatment Corporation, is an outspoken advocate of AIDS education for minority communities. AIDS activists told *GCN* that Primme has an excellent record combatting homophobia in the Black community. He has been criticized by some AIDS educators for opposing the free distribution of sanitary needles to IV drug users.

Kristine Gebbie, administrator of the Public Health Department in Oregon, has promoted gay rights legislation on both the state and federal level. Gebbie also strongly opposes mandatory AIDS testing.

Although AIDS activists greeted the appointments with enthusiasm, they pointed out that the Commission has a long way to go before it reaches respectability. "It's just another step in the yellow brick road paved with piss," said Gay Men's Health Crisis founder and playwright Larry Kramer.

Urvashi Vaid, information director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, was more diplomatic. "The administration appears at least to be attempting to salvage the credibility of the Commission by appointing reputable members," said Vaid.

The Commission, which has been broadly criticized for a lack of leadership and organization, is reportedly embroiled in internal ideological conflicts. Dr. Eugene Mayberry and Woodrow Meyers resigned in

October from the Commission, citing disagreements with other members.

The Commission has also been accused of being anti-gay. The National People With AIDS (PWA) Coalition and Minority AIDS Task Force filed suit against the presidential panel charging that it lacks adequate representation of PWAs and people of color. Several members of the Commission advocate mandatory AIDS testing.

Activists predicted the divisions on the Commission would remain despite the new appointments. Gil Gerald, executive director of minority affairs for the National AIDS Network said, "The new and different breed of people appointed has come about only because the administration has been embarrassed by reports in the press, resignations and the lawsuit."

Gerald and Vaid expressed hope that the new members of the Commission would forge a coalition with other moderate members, such as Dr. Frank Lilly, the only gay member of the Commission. Vaid said that Gebbie has been "a real friend of the community who will approach the issue from a medical rather than political standpoint." Gerald praised Primme for helping build networks among minority AIDS educators and for "calling the Black community on its homophobia."

Retired Admiral James Watkins, who replaced Mayberry as head of the Commission, promised a preliminary report by December 7 and a final draft sometime in the summer.

□ filed from Boston

# Conference stresses urgency of youth AIDS education

*Massachusetts meeting focuses on a diverse risk group facing higher HIV infection rates and complex social pressures*

*"We, as educators, must make AIDS prevention sexy for adolescents, not a matter of constraint and control."*

— John Whyte, M.D. at the New England Medical Center

By Elizabeth Pincus

BOSTON — Adolescents currently account for fewer than one percent of the reported cases of AIDS in the United States. But young people may be at increasing risk of infection, partly due to some special circumstances of adolescence — a higher tendency to take risks and experiment with drugs and sexuality, coupled with less maturity in communicating about sex with potential partners. In an attempt to air these concerns, a Massachusetts state-wide conference on Youth and AIDS was held in Cambridge on Nov. 7.

Sponsored by 14 agencies, including the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Boston's AIDS Action Committee and the Gay and Lesbian Counseling Service, the conference was designed for health care workers, teachers, social workers, public officials and anyone else working with young people. Students and parents were also welcomed, though most of the 200 in attendance were adult professionals. But one small group of articulate young men came from the Boston Alliance of Lesbian and Gay Youth (BAGLY), and another contingent of activists presented a peer education performance on AIDS through the Youth Expression Theater, a program of the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts. Overall, the adult and youth participants seemed overwhelmed with concern

that young people may be the next special population hit hard by the AIDS crisis.

The issue of AIDS prevention for youth is complex, with varied concerns for communities of color, gay and straight kids and males and females. For example, just as gay men have been the consistent force behind AIDS activism, some gay young men are emerging as leaders among their peers in awareness about safer sex and the politics of the AIDS epidemic. Young lesbians, however, struggle with a lack of information about the transmission of AIDS among women, and are also included as targets of AIDS-hysterical homophobia. For straight teenagers, the biggest area of concern around AIDS may be a misperceived sense that it is someone else's problem. And Black and Latino youth, straight or gay, are already among populations affected disproportionately by the AIDS epidemic.

The keynote address of the day-long conference was given by Eric Rofes, the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center, and a long-time AIDS activist. In an impassioned talk that evoked tears from listeners, he compared the situation of youth today with that of gay men five years ago. He described the communities as oppressed groups noted for higher tendencies for self-denial and self-hatred, drug and alcohol abuse, alienation from their families and a lack of recognition from the media. Said Rofes, "It's estimated that 45-80 percent of self-identified gay men in the U.S. are HIV-positive. We're in a parallel situation now with kids — in five years, that many young

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# ...and backs down in bid to pack Court

*Latest nominee on the record in gay rights case*

By Chris Bull

WASHINGTON, DC — President Reagan's latest Supreme Court nominee, U.S. Appeals Court Judge Anthony Kennedy, is the author of an anti-gay decision, *Beller v. Middendorf*.

In the 1980 case, the California judge rejected a challenge by three sailors to the Navy's policy of automatically discharging anyone who engages in gay sex.

Ironically, Attorney General Edwin Meese has lobbied against Kennedy's nomination because the jurist indicated in *Beller* that homosexual activity might fall under the right to privacy articulated by the Warren Court in the early 1960s.

Kennedy said, "Upholding the challenged regulations as constitutional is distinct from a statement that they are wise. The latter judgment is neither implicitly in our decision nor within our province to make."

Nan Hunter, director of the American Civil Liberties Union Lesbian and Gay Rights Project, told *GCN* the nomination marks the "first time in history that a gay-related decision has been the central factor in a president's determining whether to nominate someone to the court. For anyone left in this society who believes that gay rights are not a primary issue, this will stand as refutation."

Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) earlier threatened to filibuster the nomination if Kennedy was selected over Judge Douglas Ginsberg, who has since withdrawn. Helms, Meese and other far-right ideologues believes, according to Hunter, that Kennedy "simply didn't go far enough in denying gay rights." Kennedy, she added may have an unusual coalition of ultra-conservative and liberal opponents. □

held on a \$125,000 bond by police near New London, Conn. He was apprehended early on the morning of Nov. 12.

Cambridge Police believe Komnenus, a Charlestown, Massachusetts, resident, is responsible for at least 12-15 drugging/robberies in Cambridge, Boston, Brookline and Provincetown. In most of the incidents a man calling himself Dominic Perini told his targets it was his birthday and bought each a drink which he drugged.

Perini's victims blacked out from the drug and were robbed, often after they were taken to their own homes.

Detective Lt. Walter Boyle of the Cambridge Police Department said "several things led us to develop this suspect. Some from the news media and some from an advocate for gay and lesbian victims of crime [Joyce Collier]."

Boyle said he expects Komnenus will be transferred to Cambridge on Nov. 14. Komnenus faces charges of kidnapping, assault with a dangerous weapon and larceny.

□ filed from Boston

# Mass. rights bill still on hold

*'Who's calling whom perverse?' asks les/gay caucus co-chair*

By Kim Westheimer

BOSTON — As *GCN* goes to pressponents of the Massachusetts lesbian and gay rights bill are fighting to keep the bill from being amended to death in the Senate. Supporters of the legislation remain fearful that a final vote could be delayed until after the current legislative session. An initial vote is unlikely to occur before Monday, Nov. 15.

An amendment proposed on Nov. 10 by Sen. Arthur Lewis (D-Boston), which would have completely gutted the bill, was defeated two days later by a 22-17 margin. The Lewis amendment would have narrowed the scope of the legislation to forbid landlords and real estate agents from asking someone their sexual orientation.

A motion to "table discussion" of the Lewis amendment was also defeated 22-17. Had this amendment passed, the bill could not have been voted on in this legislative session, which will end in less than two months.

Lewis has been one of the most vocal opponents of the bill. Calling the bill reverse discrimination, he has stated the legislation will take the civil rights movement "back 100 years." Lewis was a virulent opponent of busing in Boston in the 1970s.

Two amendments to the bill were passed on Nov. 13. Both call for non-binding statewide referendums if the legislation passes. One amendment proposes a ballot question for next year's statewide elections which would ask voters if they approve of the law which "makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of sexual preference in housing and employment." The other ballot question is slated for the upcoming presidential primary and asks whether voters wish to repeal an act which provides legal rights based on sexual orientation. The first amendment passed 23-16. The second amendment passed 27-12.

It is expected that opponents of the legislation will continue to attempt to delay a vote. Sen. Edward Kirby (R-Whitman) said in a speech before the Senate last week that even if more than 50 percent of the senators support the legislation, he will fight adamantly to prevent the bill from coming to a vote during this legislative session. Lewis has stated that if the bill is initially passed by the Senate he will tie it up in the Committee on Third Reading, which he chairs. All legislation initially passed by the Senate must pass out of that committee before coming up for a final vote.

Senate President William Bulger, an opponent of the bill, has the power to stop inordinate delays. Bulger has been pressured by Gov. Michael Dukakis to let the bill come for a vote. But a key aide to Bulger, Paul Mahone, told a group of Christian fundamentalists that the bill is "dangerous." Mahone also told the fundamentalists it was very likely the bill will be seriously delayed.

Sen. Royal Bolling, a key supporter of the bill, told *GCN* it is imperative that Bulger halt the delay tactics. "Lewis publicly stated that his objective is to obstruct and delay the bill," said Bolling. "They no longer can go under the guise of parliamentary maneuvering. It's out in the open. Their objective is to deny at least one half of the Senate their right to vote in favor [of the bill]."

Arline Isaacson, co-chair of the Massachusetts Lesbian and Gay Political Caucus, called the delay of the bill "perverse." "They call us perverts. If you wanted to design a byzantine, perverse, convoluted [process] you couldn't come up with a better one than this." □

Staff writer Elizabeth Pincus contributed to this story.

# Suspect nabbed in birthday mugger case

*Charlestown, Mass., resident is believed to be 'Dominic Perini'*

By Kim Westheimer

LEDYARD, CT — State Police have apprehended the prime suspect in the wave of Massachusetts robberies and druggings in gay bars.

Frank Komnenus, Jr., who authorities allege used the alias Dominic Perini, is being



## Come prepared for a good time RETREAT UPDATE (Nov. 21-22)

Everyone (all volunteers, old and current board members, etc.) is welcome — and encouraged — to come along for **GCN's first annual retreat**. The staff, board and some volunteers have been schmoozing about the trip; here's our tentative agenda:

Saturday we'll gather between 4 and 5 p.m. at Packard Manse (a huge house about 1/2 hour from Boston). We'll do some large and small group talking to get to know one another and to pick discussion topics for Sunday. After dinner (potluck) people can choose between watching videos, playing music (bring guitars, etc.) or just hanging out.

We've planned two large group discussion times on Sunday, with a two hour block in the middle for eating, playing (rumor has it many Twister games will appear) or more discussion. We'll wrap up by 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Call to talk about car-pooling, to tell us what dish you'll bring, or to get directions: 426-4469. Do join in!

**GCN welcomes all letters to the editor except personal attacks. Carbon copies of letters sent elsewhere are printed on a space-available basis. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN membership. Letters must be TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED AND NO LONGER THAN THREE PAGES. Send to: Community Voices, GCN, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.**

## Segregating HIV positives

Dear *GCN*:

I would like to say that I am a gay male, 25, and very proud of what we stand for.

I'm having problems right now, as I have tested HIV positive. I cannot start to explain what I'm going through in here, but from the depths of my heart I'm asking you and the gay community to send letters asking for my proper classification status, which should be where there are other HIV positive inmates, on administration segregation status. This would help my emotional state tremendously.

Every time I go to a doctor, lawyer or anywhere, they use the plastic gloves, which causes a lot of emotional grief. The other prisoners know what the gloves mean and are not 'supportive'. If I were housed with other HIV positives I would be able to cope a whole lot better. My physical safety is not guaranteed elsewhere. I don't know how much more stress I can handle. Please send me a subscription to your paper. Any letters in support of my placement with other HIVs can be sent to: Warden Alford, Rt.1 Box 150, Tennessee Colony, TX 75861.

Sincerely  
Lewis Vonelli  
403747 Coffield  
Rt. 1, Box 150  
Tennessee Colony, TX 75861

[Prisoner Project note: In case you get confused about why some prisoners want to be 'segregated' and others don't, you should be aware that prisoners and prison 'experiences' are

very different from one another. Some prisoners, for example, who test HIV positive or who are simply gay want to be in 'protection', because in the 'joint' where they are it is (relatively) safe, even though there may be little (or no!) access to companionship, law or reading libraries, jobs, daily exercise/shower, etc. etc.

Other prisoners, regardless of their HIV status want to be in 'general population' (with the bulk of the prisoners) where they have more chance of being with friends, having a job, going to school, etc., because they feel they can take care of themselves and in that particular joint it would not be life-threatening.

All prison systems work on the 'carrot-&stick' plan, where some 'facilities' are 'safe' and some are not. The (unpublic) message here is: "If you (prisoner) do what you're told, you'll go to the safe joint, if not . . ."

Of course, out gay prisoners often can't do what they're 'told' (be strait/narrow jerks). Not so different in some ways from the rest of life, no?

## Commemorative abortion medallions next?

Dear *GCN*:

I'd like to take a moment to let you know how much I objected to the advertisement in *GCN* for a set of commemorative AIDS medallions. The artwork on the Phoenix was laughable, the idea of connecting an erotic image (the young man draped in a towel) with a sexually transmitted plague is egregious, and the whole idea of making money by exploiting a human disaster is in the poorest of taste. What's next — commemorative abortion medallions?

You have too excellent a paper to let its reputation become tarnished by association.

Thanks for listening.

Sincerely yours,  
Peter Mumford  
Lynn, MA

## More flack for Visa

Dear *GCN*:

The enclosed is a copy of a letter I wrote to Working Assets — a "socially responsible" investment fund:

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have had your Working Assets Visa card for quite some time now and have enjoyed using it (prudently, of course) knowing that each transaction puts money into the coffers of a variety of progressive organizations.

I am writing to you, however, to inform you that I will not be able to use your Visa card until further notice. The reason for this is because the Visa organization has decided to donate 5¢ to the U.S. Olympic Committee every time the Visa card is used between July 1, 1987-December 31, 1987 and April 1, 1988-September 30, 1988.

As you may or may not be aware, the U.S. Olympic Committee brought a homophobic law suit against the organization that sponsors the Gay Games. Originally, the Gay Games were called the Gay Olympics. However, the U.S. Olympic Committee sued, stating that they had an exclusive copyright to the name "Olympic." This suit has been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The word "Olympic," as we all know, is used constantly: the Handicapped Olympics, the Children's Olympics, the Clambake Olympics, etc. The U.S. Olympic Committee has never tried to stop any other group from using that word. It is only because of homophobia, pure and simple, that they brought suit against the Gay Olympics.

While I support the Working Assets ideals, as a gay man I cannot, in good conscience, use the Visa card while Visa is making these donations. As a matter of fact, if my Visa card was from any organization other than Working Assets, I would cut it in half and return it. That is still a possible course of action, one I would not like to take, but one I may have to depending on your response to this situation.

What can you do to convince me otherwise? You can make Working Assets Visa cardholders aware of what Visa is doing and encourage them to write letters of protest to:

Jan Soderstrom  
Visa Marketing Department  
Olympic Program  
P.O. Box 8999  
San Francisco, CA 94218

and send a copy to:

**Gay Community News** is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of eleven, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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Colorado Springs, CO 80909

You can also write a letter of protest to Visa yourselves and, at the same time, donate all monies gathered during these periods of time exclusively to lesbian and gay organizations, any and all of which are constantly in need of funds. I received the information in this letter from *Gay Community News*, a newspaper published in Boston, Massachusetts, and from Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, Inc. (GLAAD), an organization based here in New York. Both of these groups, as well as many others, would welcome the donations.

I am sure that there are many other lesbians and gay men with your card, as well as straight people that protest homophobia. I am also sure that I am not alone in wanting to see you take a stand on this issue. Working Assets Visa, after all, is supposed to be the card with a conscience.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,  
Robert Kaplan  
New York, NY

P.S. *GCN*: As an ex-Bostonian who's been subscribing for over 10 years, I just want to say I'm so very glad *GCN* exists.

## This isn't a monastery; it's a prison

Dear *GCN*:

I received both your letter and the information packet concerning AIDS. Thank you very much for both. Just last week 'security' decided to air 2 videos on AIDS. The warden and doctor were there to answer questions, which we fired at them like an avalanche. Their suggestion was that we resort to celibacy. This isn't a monastery, it's a prison. When I pushed the doctor for her 'personal' solution, she showed her true homophobic colors. She threw the Bible at us, saying the homosexuality was perverse and turning from it would free us of disease.

After the brass left, some inmates who witnessed the debate came over and asked me some questions. The doctor had used college level medical terminology that most inmates couldn't understand. But when I broke everything down to a common level, they understood it perfectly.

The officials had decided to show the videos to relieve their consciences and allow themselves to say that the responsibility for AIDS is now in the hands of the prisoners. AIDS is the cure in their eyes for their 'over-population' problem here.

The average educational level of the prisoners here is 4th or 5th grade. How does the staff of this prison expect these people to understand language like 'Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, Kaposi's sarcoma, Lymphomas, etc. etc.? And they refuse to speak language that all of us can relate to.

They talk to us as if we were just illiterates and deserving of death, and they despise the laws that (sometimes, when we can get the attention of a lawyer) protect our rights.

There are more than 40 confirmed cases here in Angola and the 'medical' staff just feeds them antibiotics hoping it will keep other inmates from noticing the infections. Security is terrified by the thought that uneducated prisoners will riot if they learn that there are people with AIDS among us.

And that's what's really sad — that the prisoners won't unite against the spread of the virus until after someone they were close to has died. And with 'closeness' being as rare as it is in here, . . .

I'm going to do everything in my power to educate my fellow inmates, my friends. There are some others willing to help. But even as much as we know, there are still questions we've been asked that we have trouble answering. I wrote to Surgeon General Koop over a month ago requesting his reports on AIDS, but as of this letter have received no reply. There are others too who have ignored my letters requesting information, probably dismissing them because I'm a prisoner.

I'll close now, but wish to thank you once again for your help.

Sincerely,  
Richard Dennard  
108996 Magnolia 4  
Angola, LA 70712

## Coming home and back into the closet

By W. Nash

I wish to compliment you on your recent news and photographic coverage of the Lesbian and Gay March on Washington. It has been one of the more accurate and positive sources of information, as well as a fine report of the spectrum of intense emotions so strongly experienced by those of us who participated that weekend. I am sure many others besides myself felt an overwhelming sense of pride and valid self-worth that weekend, as well as sadness and deep frustration as we returned to our emotionally cold and homophobic environments.

I realized some time ago, when I came out with pride and dignity to my family, friends, and work colleagues, that the intensity of these emotions was not just a privilege, but our human right. However, the struggle to maintain this personal premise has never been more painful than now. This is largely due to a personal situation that I am certain I share with many of your readers.

My lover and I come from vastly different experiences. I analogize us to the proverbial "closet": I burst out a year and a half ago and burned down the door so I could not go back; my lover has spent the last 7 years peeking out through a crack that varies in size, depending upon his state of mind and immediate surroundings — always with one hand firmly on the closet doorknob. This has raised many issues in our relationship, both politically and personally, but until D.C. had never threatened our deep respect for our differences.

To see someone you love march for the dignity and respect of his lifestyle (which includes your relationship) return home to

*I write to our closeted lovers: each time you deny our existence, you cut away a piece of the integrity of our love, and eventually the damage is irreparable*

crawl back into the comfortable closet is virtually unbearable. The harsh message that I ultimately receive is that he believes the lies of the homophobic community, and that through their imposed ignorance he must always look upon our love with shame and nonacceptance. This message comes only after acknowledging that I have loved and respected a man that does not love and respect himself. For this I cannot stop loving him, nor can I hate the community that created him through their fear, for many of my loved ones exist within this community.

I write for so many others who feel as I do. For all the others who have shared dreams of a life together with their lovers. For those of us who ask our closeted lovers for only a movement toward acknowledgment of our existence. A movement that extends beyond a seemingly daring touch of our hand in public (or the like). A movement that tests the love of their biological family (the so-called unconditional love) and attempts to integrate "them" and "us." A movement that commands respect from their chosen family by the presence of their own self-respect. A movement toward our true unity.

I write for all of us who know we can only exist within relationships that acknowledge inherent dignity and respect. For those of us who believed in the Doris Day and Rock Hudson love stories and have learned to re-gender the role most appropriate. For those of us who believe that happy endings can form from seemingly dark beginnings.

I write this for all of us who have marched and carried the "absence" of our present lovers.

But mostly I write this to our lovers: each time you deny our existence, you cut away a piece of the integrity of our love, and eventually the damage is irreparable. For too long we have taken our sexuality lying down. Well, we have learned to march and will continue to do so with or without your true presence beside us. We will carry you at times when you truly need us, but we are only human. Please — come out for life or come out for love...but, just come out for good!

W. Nash is a *GCN* reader from Boston

## Raids and HIV testing in Costa Rica

By Demitrio Boniche

For how long have we read in newspapers and bulletins about police raids of locales frequented by gays? And how much more will we have to hear about it until people are outraged enough to stop? Or will it be already too late?

Once more the subject is gay oppression, a subject certainly not new to the community. Most of us have unfortunately become bored and apathetic to the point of insensitivity.

My plea this time concerns Costa Rica, a small democracy quietly hiding in turmoil-ridden Central America, where in March and April I visited family and friends. And as gay activists are known to do when they travel, I contacted gay groups and members of the community.

So I asked the questions on my mind. What has been happening within the gay community regarding AIDS? Are there cases reported? What are the official government policies? What follows is what I learned during my visit.

On the weekend of March 27-29, police raided the disco "Torre Nueva" in San Jose, a "petit bourgeoisie" night spot frequented by the gay middle class. Approximately 300 patrons were detained for 24 hours. One week after the incident, I met some of the detainees and was astounded at their refusal to give me any account of the incident. Why?

Harassment, confiscation of porno films in bathhouses, closing down of bathhouses, rest areas and dark rooms, identification checks, etc. have all become commonplace in San Jose during recent months. And what are the reasons being given? Violation of public moral code, corruption, drug possession, etc. Due to these accusations gays have had to pay fines, become listed in security files of the Organizacion de Investigacion Judicial (OIJ), a government body well known for its repressive police actions.

Meanwhile, the media has consistently played its part in lodging a propaganda campaign against AIDS. Edgar Mohs, the Minister of Health, has called on Parliament to vote for mandatory AIDS testing

*Harassment, confiscation of porno films, identification checks have all become commonplace in San Jose during recent months*

of all government employees and students. In the newspapers and on television, photographs and interviews depict officials taking the test and calling on the public to support their proposals in order to limit the spread of the disease. I have also learned that all foreign students wishing to reside in Costa Rica are required to present proof that they test negative for AIDS before they can receive a resident visa. Up to now only two countries require this for international students (the other being Finland).

But the test in Costa Rica is not anonymous. Several clinics perform the test, but the patient must give his/her name and address. The reasons being given: to start a file and if tested positive, a follow-up investigation. Why, I say, if there is no cure and it should be up to the individual to decide and not to the government. Why the police harassment and arrests? Supposedly to prevent and stop the spread of AIDS. What really infuriated me after all this was to hear a doctor from this ministry saying that there are many ways "through which AIDS is propagated"; yet it is a medical fact that there are only two: blood and exchange of sexual fluids.

But what are the gays and lesbians doing? No group has come out publicly against these actions, which actually is not too shocking in a country where there is not even a public gay or lesbian community. But Costa Rica is only one example. Throughout the world, there is not enough intolerance of these intolerant actions.

I call upon members of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), as well as all concerned individuals, to send letters of protest to the various governmental departments (health, immigration, etc.) demanding the END of these repressive actions, and demanding the END of the mandatory AIDS test. Instead, we must continue to educate and inform the public, both gay and straight, about the truth and against homophobia, before it is too late for all people.

Government Departments:

Sr. Ministro  
Rolando Ramirez  
Ministerio de Gobernacion  
San Jose, Costa Rica

Sr. Ministro  
Dr. Edgar Mohs  
Ministerio de Salud  
Apartado 745  
1000 San Jose, Costa Rica

Sr. Ministro  
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Ministerio de Seguridad Publica  
San Jose, Costa Rica

Sr. Francisco Villalobos  
Jefe de Inmigracion  
Ministerio de Gobernacion  
San Jose, Costa Rica

Please send copies of all letters to:

Demitrio Boniche  
Blucherstrasse 14  
5300 Bonn I FRG

*Demitrio Boniche is a reader from Germany.*

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# Les / gay Jews unite

New Jewish Agenda organizes meeting at National March

**By Maida Tilchen**  
WASHINGTON, DC — Jewish lesbians and gay men and friends gathered during the March on Washington weekend for a moving and unifying ceremony and celebration. Hundreds crammed into a too-small room, while others packed into the adjoining halls and still others were turned away for lack of space.

The Oct. 10 evening's events began with a havdalah ceremony, which marks the end of the Jewish sabbath on Saturday night. A braided, three-wicked candle was lit, cups of wine passed, and prayers recited, led by Yoel Kahn, the rabbi from the San Francisco gay/lesbian synagogue, and musician Ronnie Gilbert. After the candle was extinguished in a cup of wine, Ronnie sang in Yiddish and English. Elliot Pilshaw, Ruth Pelham and Alix Dobkin each performed a short set, with many sing-alongs included. It was the sing-alongs that brought the lesbian and gay Jewish community of the U.S. together so movingly. One participant remarked that the event felt very much like events at Jewish summer camps which many present had attended. Jewish summer camps and songs have been a prime educational tool for teaching Jewish kids to have pride in their heritage and loyalty to their community. And now at last the gay/lesbian

kids were singing together — everything from “We are a gentle, angry people...” to a Hebrew song, a standard of Jewish summer camps, whose lyrics go something like “the world is really tough, the work to be done looks impossible, be that as it may, I’m going to try to fix it.” The event was organized by New Jewish Agenda, which is not a gay/lesbian group, but a national group for progressive Jews working on many issues — lesbian/gay rights, feminism, anti-nuclear concerns, and Central America. A particularly poignant moment came when singer Ruth Pelham introduced her presumably straight parents to the crowd, explaining that their attitudes about her lesbianism have improved considerably since she first came out to them. Although there is an international organization of Jewish lesbian/gay congregations which has held gatherings in several countries, the Oct. 10 convocation will certainly be a landmark for Jewish lesbians and gay men in the U.S. Even the convergence of four Jewish musicians felt significant — each has been successful in the lesbian, women’s, or gay men’s music circuits, but Jewish lesbian/gay music in itself really has no identity.

□filed from Boston

# Scondras aides sue councilors

*‘Take your vote. And I guarantee you a civil rights case you will never hear the end of.’*

“Take your vote. And I guarantee you a civil rights case you will never hear the end of.” —Gay City Councilor David Scondras, addressing the Boston City Council shortly before it voted to fire two of his aides.

**By Kim Westheimer**  
BOSTON — The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts filed a suit against the Boston City Council on behalf of two gay aides to Scondras who were fired last month. The suit, filed on November 5, claims the City Council violated the first amendment rights of French Wall and Gary Dotterman. Wall and Dotterman were fired for their in-

volvement in the Committee for Civil Liberties and Sexual Freedom (CCLSF), an organization formed to ensure fair treatment of all parties in cases where sex is alleged between gay people and minors. The suit also states that the Council denied the aides due process of the law and violated Massachusetts civil rights law. Wall and Dotterman were not allowed to state their case before the Council. The suit seeks more than \$5,000 in damages, as well as back pay for the aides from the individual councilors who voted in favor of the firing. Scondras and Councilor Charles Yancey were the only councilors who did not vote against the aides.□

# Youth

Continued from page 3  
people could be infected. It rips me apart. But we’re more educated now and shouldn’t let it hit again like a ton of bricks.” Rofes also denounced the tendency to describe kids as innocent victims. “There are no ‘innocent victims,’ just as there are no ‘guilty victims,’ ” he stressed. “People develop the disease in different ways and all of our lives are on the line. For kids, safer sex education is much more complicated than ‘Just Say No’ to drugs or sex. We must empower kids to make choices, to communicate....We must encourage self-esteem so there’s a youth culture to support choices. We must be non-judgmental and give kids the best information possible.” Youth participants at the conference expressed agreement that peer education seems the best method for learning about AIDS prevention. Many of the conference facilitators pointed out that gay teenage men, who may already be ostracized among their age group, need support in sorting out the disinformation that has produced myths connecting all “homosexual behavior” with AIDS. According to Kevin Cranston, the conference coordinator who also runs the Youth Project of Boston’s Gay and Lesbian Counseling Service, myths abound about AIDS prevention similar to fallacies about pregnancy prevention. In one of the workshop presentations, he spoke of the need to reassure kids that not all gay sexuality is high risk. Cranston strongly advocates support groups like BAGLY, that provide safe, non-coercive meetings for young gay men and lesbians to voice their concerns and spend

time together. At the conference, one BAGLY member heard for the first time about races to put condoms on bananas as a group method to lessen the stigma of condom use. “That’s what we need,” he said enthusiastically. “Situations that take away the weirdness and break the tension. It’s helpful to hear about safer sex in street language, the crude stuff. Everyone’s a prude at first, but there’s nothing wrong with having fun and learning something, too.” He also expressed his perception that it is now “uncool” among younger gay men to practice unsafe sex. He also spoke of the irony of having to educate and reassure his parents and friends about safer sex, an additional stress during the already difficult stages of adolescence and coming out. Many conference participants expressed concern for young people living outside urban areas with organized gay communities. Most kids live in climates of homophobia and AIDS panic, where physical and verbal fag-bashing often includes accusations about gay people as spreaders of AIDS. Six years into the epidemic, more acknowledgement exists about the risk for AIDS among heterosexuals, but adolescents do not yet have access to explicit information, according to the educators. The government’s posture of suppression is evidenced by the recent passage of the Helms amendment limiting safer sex education. Many of the conference workshops tried to offer some hope around these problems, with topics ranging from Kids, Drugs and AIDS: Multiple Risks; to Homophobia as a Barrier to AIDS Education; to Street Youth. Some workshops offered specific, current infor-

Continued on page 10

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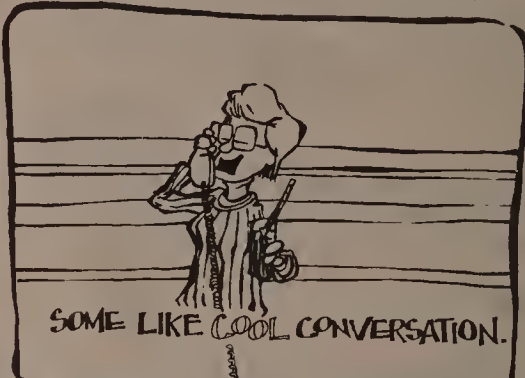
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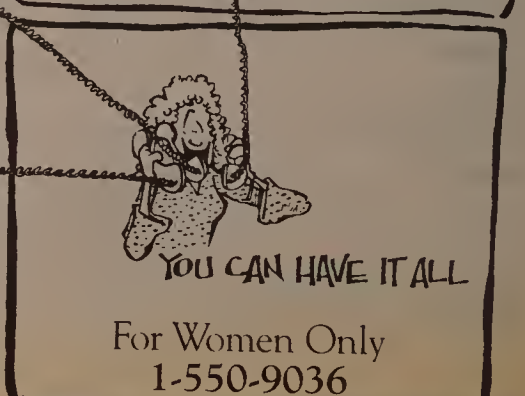
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Larry Kert and Harvey Evans (seated, L-R) and the 'Cagelles' in *La Cage aux folles*

## Changing men

*The national touring company brings La Cage aux folles back to where it all began*

**La Cage aux folles.** Directed by Arthur Laurents. Music and lyrics by Jerry Herman. Book by Harvey Fierstein. With Larry Kert and Harvey Evans. At The Wang Center for the Performing Arts. Through November 15.

By Christopher Wittke

Just as the Broadway production of the 1984 Tony Award-winning Best Musical, *La Cage aux folles*, is about to trot off into the pages of theater history, a relatively strong version of same is now prancing out the glitter and the frocks in a limited run in Boston. *La Cage* enjoyed its highly successful pre-Broadway tryouts here in 1983, and judging from the opening night standing ovations, is in for a warm reception this time around, too.

The very familiar *La Cage* storyline revolves around the La Cage aux folles drag club in St. Tropez and the comic chaos which ensues when the proprietor, Georges, and his lover, drag diva Albin, attempt to "straighten up" their lives for a visit with the conservative future in-laws of George's son, Jean-Michel. Further comic relief is provided along the way by "Les Cagelles," a wondrous chorus of drag queens (played by both men and women, although I defy any audience member to delineate them by real-life gender), and Jacob, a too-terrific house-servant of Georges and Albin who walks a thin line between camp nirvana and racist stereotype. The major question of the proceedings is "Will the insensitive Jean-Michel completely alienate Albin, the only mother he has ever known, just because he's a gay man who looks fabulous in a shimmery glitter number with matching six inch pumps?"

Larry Kert, star of last year's prematurely closed *Rags*, brings such a restrained control to his portrayal of Georges that I expect it is possible to see his temples throbbing in the furthest reaches of the Wang Center's balcony. His first real warmth comes across half way through Act One when Georges and Albin harmonize beautifully on "With You on My Arm." From that point on, Kert actually seems involved in the action rather than just filling up space.

Kert's early cardboard delivery makes it difficult for Kent Gash, who starts his per-

formance of the flamboyant Jacob, the butler/maid, at several levels over the top. This makes their initial interaction resemble a contest between a hyperactive pitbull on speed and a stuffed Benji doll.

It is quite ironic that the biggest queen in the whole production is Dan O'Grady, the man cast as the straight son, Jean-Michel (or is it impolite to mention that?). Granted, apparently-straight actors have been swishing their ways through one-dimensional queer roles since time immemorial. But O'Grady's inability to land anywhere near his target of heterosexual line-towing brings *unintended* fakeness to a show that thrives on illusion. Gay men *should* play straight characters — and they *have* for years — it's just that they should be better actors — and not ask us to suspend so much disbelief.

The eight man/woman troupe of Les Cagelles really are as wonderful as they were designed to be. Their comic interludes and vivacious can-can line are the glittery highlights of the show — except for those moments when Harvey Evans, as Albin, is front and center.

Evans stands a wigged-head and padded shoulders above the rest of the cast. His Albin is a lovable, sensitive drag queen that only a cad like Jean-Michel could deny. His rendition of that world-famous declaration of personal politics, "I Am What I Am," was so strong on opening night that even the crummy sound system and Wang Center acoustics couldn't snuff it.

The Second Act highlights both belong to Evans: the sidesplitting attempts to butch himself up in order to pass as Jean-Michel's Uncle Al, and his infectious testament to an exuberant life, "The Best of Times." When the requisite happy ending comes along with Evans' surprising curtain-closing appearance, it's difficult not to feel good about having just watched a Feel-Good Show. If a performer like Evans can deliver so much on a play which has such crucial things going against it as a weak script by Harvey Fierstein (which pretty much collapses in the Second Act), and a batch of Jerry Herman songs which are 50-50 at best — and can still manage to tell theatergoers that "Gay is OK" without coming close to what real gay life is like — well, who am I to complain? □

## Cops

Continued from page 1

place in October of 1985, police officers destroyed the club: walls were kicked in, wires were hacksawed and sound equipment was destroyed.

Not too long before the club opened, "we figured out [Sheehan and Connolly] were looking for money," said D'Onofrio. "It was well known that we were not going to pay anyone — our attorneys made it clear."

D'Onofrio and Paul Cadoret, also a partner in the Loft, believe their failure to pay the officers resulted in harassment by the police. D'Onofrio said police officers took at least \$100,000 during raids in the eight-year history of the Loft. Tens of thousands

of dollars of property, liquor and soda were also confiscated by the police, he added. D'Onofrio and Cadoret also said Sheehan even threatened to kill their dog.

D'Onofrio estimated between 40 and 80 police officers were involved in the Loft raids. "Paul and I and a lot of people who worked at the Loft waited ten years to see some of these people arrested," he said. "We look forward to seeing the prosecution of hundreds of others who benefited by, cooperated with, and protected these people."

The indicted officers pleaded innocent to all charges in U.S. District Court. They were released on \$100,000 unsecured bond and are scheduled for a Jan. 11 trial. Some of the counts carry penalties of up to 20 years in prison and \$250,000 fines. □

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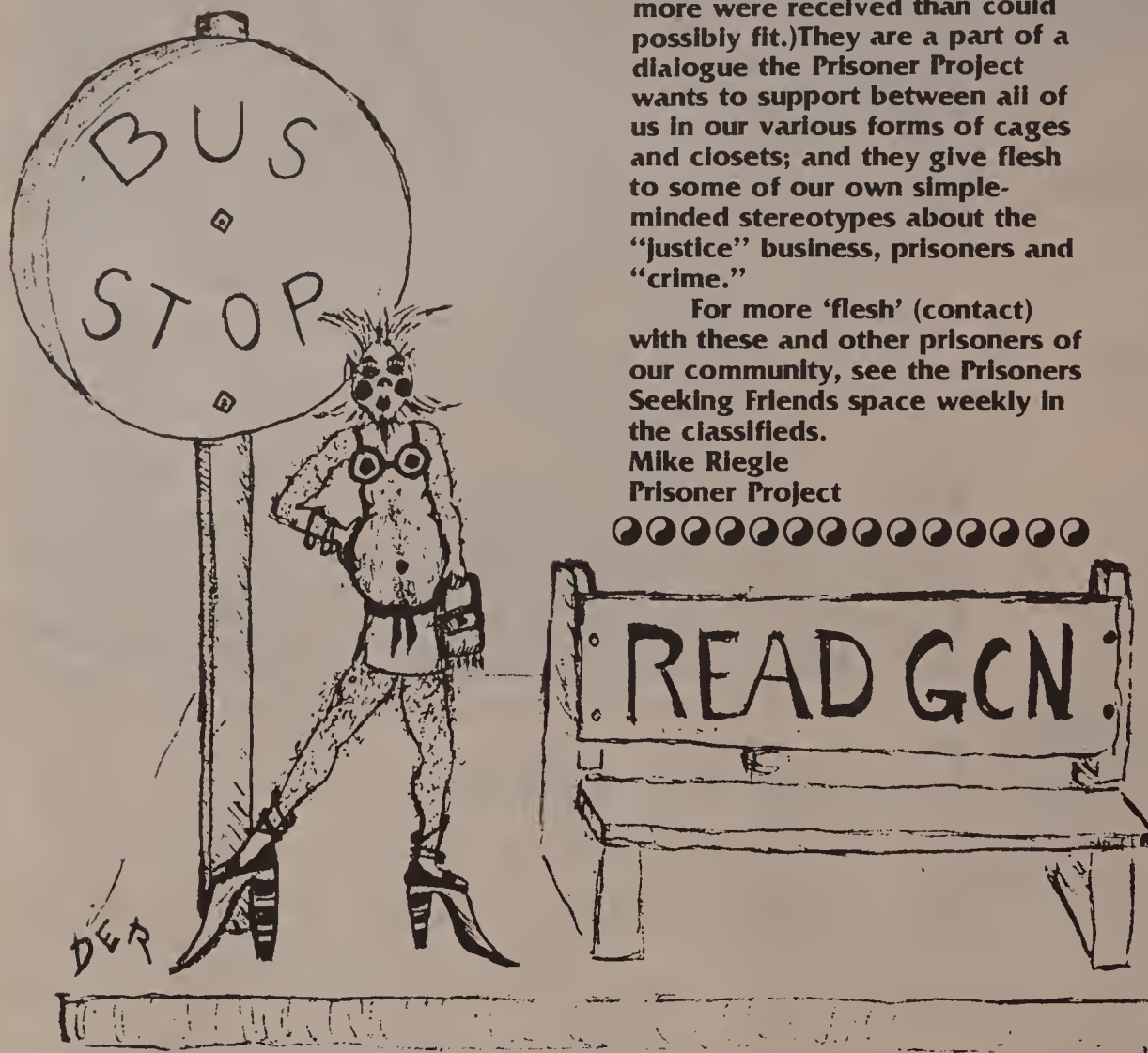
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# Tongue taunted n



oooooooooooooooooooo

These poems and drawings are by lesbians and gay men behind bars who read GCN weekly. (Many more were received than could possibly fit.) They are a part of a dialogue the Prisoner Project wants to support between all of us in our various forms of cages and closets; and they give flesh to some of our own simple-minded stereotypes about the "justice" business, prisoners and "crime."

For more 'flesh' (contact) with these and other prisoners of our community, see the Prisoners Seeking Friends space weekly in the classifieds.

Mike Riegler  
Prisoner Project

oooooooooooooooooooo

David Emerson Rezabek

## Death blooms shameless

Death blooms shameless . . . earthy richness summoning passing stranger . . . always over or around the next hill or bend . . . the traveler searches ceaseless . . . restless questions within . . . meeting delinquent truants in obscure places . . . inviting the secret dead to its counsel of ravishing beastly feasting . . . taking note of secluded places with last year's evidence . . . weathered tattered and torn panties, briefs, candy wrappers, matches and old cigarette butts . . . an old soiled mattress inviting more abuse . . . oh, tempter . . . relentless meandering craving . . .

David Emerson Rezabek

## I am the prison

I am society's collector of debts,  
and my purse is the bottomless maw of man,  
insatiably storing the payments of days . . .  
implacably totaling the months and the years.

I am the abode of hope become hopeless;  
of routine so deadly  
the simple act of mere living becomes a weary,  
numbing task . . .

I hold within me those who cling to life,  
who walk along my stone-walled corridors  
in silent resignation,  
in passive waiting.

I am the bitterness in the hearts of the many  
who become mine because they stood alone and poor.

I am the contempt of all who have learned  
from experience  
that law and justice are not always noble and just . . .  
but are oft-times purchasable commodities.

Come . . . come and look upon the faces of these I hold;  
and see thereon the reflection  
of society's inadequacy,  
of humanity's inhumanity.

I am more formidable even than my stone walls  
and steel bars and lethal gun towers;  
for not only do I confine,  
I slowly, irrevocably destroy  
those I hold within me.  
I am loneliness and heartache,  
and my teeth sink deep where anxiety swells  
and uncertainty constricts and stifles.

I am the memory that comes in the night  
like a grim futile scream  
in your impenetrable indifference.

David Duane Ferrand

## Plastic People

Plastic people are of the same mold,  
They build themselves up and are usually bold.

They preach of values that could reach the sky,  
Then they smile in your face and tell you a lie . . .

Plastic people . . . they're all the same,  
They claim to adore you, but that's part of the game.

Plastic people claim to be men,  
But when you see right through them,  
They quiver, and stumble, and  
Coat themselves in plastic again.

Jerry Ragland

## The window of my cell

I'm standing here looking out the window of my cell,  
Wondering if what I did was bad enough to deserve this living hell.  
I often feel like I'm living in this world alone.  
I've been locked up so long sometimes this place feels like home.  
I know one day I'll be free and I'll walk out the front gate.  
Until that day I'll sit here filled with bitterness, anger and hate.  
Last night I lost the only person I could call friend.  
Right now I feel so lonely inside, it doesn't seem like it will end.  
I hope one day another will come along to be a friend to me,  
And unlock the prison of my heart and set my spirit free.  
Until that I'll sit here in this living hell,  
Looking out the window of my lonely prison cell.

Adrienne M. Gannon

## Captive Love

My heart is calloused  
from years without love.  
No words can explain  
the pain of a life  
That has become  
one big rejection-slip.  
Nor can I speak  
words to explain  
A captive love  
I cannot release  
For fear of  
another rejection slip.  
Tears don't soothe,  
screaming doesn't ease  
the hurt.

Timothy Scaggs

## Snitch No

We're all snitching  
Down in the woman's penitentiary  
We all worked against the system  
And no matter what creed,  
Or what dinky deed  
Society says that ain't no excuse.

There's an unwritten code in here:  
Don't get too close (although you're so near).  
Friends and foes beware.  
You can lie, but don't glare.  
'I shared my last line!  
Wasn't I a good sport?'

Not enough of nothing  
Is what it's all about.  
Empty stares from drugged out minds  
Broken stories full of lies.  
Started young, lying and dying  
In those penitentiary blues.

Cassandra Hynes

## Smoke fills the room

Smoke fills the room  
and a vision of you  
becomes so bold  
I can't move my eyes  
from the space you occupy.  
You're reaching out to me  
but I'm frozen to my seat,  
my arms desperately trying  
to welcome you.  
My heart beats faster  
and tears fill my eyes  
as the vision of you  
fades  
and I'm here alone, again.

N.T. Kallenberg

## Taking a chance

(dedicated to Debra—)  
I'm taking a chance  
caring for you  
I know it  
it scares me  
but won't stop  
'Cause I see too  
in you  
to just let you  
slip by  
And I've learned  
that only through  
and the reaching  
for more  
will there ever  
a chance for a  
I've dreamed.

Traci 'Passion' C

## Searing

Searing visions  
Tender sisters;  
Apace you live  
Colorful cartwheels  
You are my sister  
Mason "Vanna"

## My friend

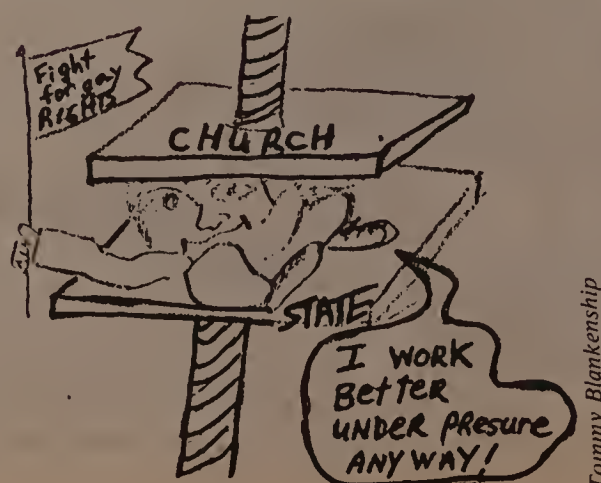
(To Greg Thomas; a  
I lost my friend  
The guards came  
There really wa

But I know if w  
He'll still be my  
And we will me  
Just wait and se  
Ferrell Lynn Gaty

## Reaching out

Let us make much of affection.  
In our time we know too many  
And love too few.  
The abstract hand of brotherhood  
Is too cold, too bloodless  
To comfort us.  
We need warm, live fingers  
To clasp in a dark place,  
A real shoulder next to our own  
For a long day's going.  
We know too many  
And love too few.  
Let us make much of affection.

Thomas Lee Butler



## What makes me

Does it make me  
me a man,  
who has an  
Does it make me  
in the arms of  
like myself  
Does it make me  
of another m  
No!

Then why must  
as a punk, sis  
when I'm n  
Why is others a  
or found to b  
(amusing)?  
Why am I the o  
or who's sick  
(gay even!)  
Why can't the  
as people wh  
and hurt?  
Why can't I be  
just typical, L  
and I'm Ga  
Lamont Patters

pples ooo

Silly Putty

Bend me, bounce me around  
stretch me to fit  
effortlessly.  
Press me hard  
let me feel your strength  
I'll smooth out  
match your designs.  
Leave me,  
I'll sit quietly  
shapelessly  
without your hands.  
Stop loving me,  
playing with me,  
I'll crack,  
break apart with hard  
or soft blow  
will melt  
hug the ground.

Vincent Maulsby

Terr

I feel silly, going to movies  
still buying the jumbo popcorn,  
saving a seat  
when I know I'm solo now,  
the only his in the laundry basket  
is mine.  
It's easy enough to say I miss you,  
the way you feel in the night,  
your gentle touch and special smell.  
But trying to explain understandably  
that I miss your morning mouth,  
the hair you always left in the sink,  
even your grungy sweat socks,  
takes some doing,  
to people who never knew you  
or saw you stretching at dawn  
in front of the window,  
or spent a night with you  
watching kittens being born,  
crying in each other's arms  
at our personal miracle.  
To some  
this love song sung to the gods  
celebrating you,  
the hurt now that you're gone  
may seem childish;  
those other fish in the sea,  
you know.  
But we're stuck, you and I,  
where and what we are,  
victims of Cupid's fallout  
where love is real  
and sometimes outlasts the players.

Vincent Maulsby

David Emerson Rezabek



Some poems by Charlie Willis ooooooooooooooooooooo

Untitled

Hearts pure as pearls, opal emotions  
Overflowing, cascading.  
Mysteries etched in emerald minds  
Onyx eyes, glistening & twinkling  
Sapphires of solace.  
Ebony embraces, a crystalline  
Xenolith of topaz lovers.  
Unions of diamond dreams  
And ruby realities:  
Loving jewels set upon life's hand.

*(The above untitled poem was written  
in 'code' (smile). We have a prison  
paper but they are anti-homo, so I  
wrote it so that the first letters of  
each line taken together spell  
HOMOSEXUAL (smile).*

Ronny

The hand wavers  
thoughts cease.  
It begins  
oh, so deep  
On these lips  
it catches.  
Rises through  
these cheeks.  
This tear.

Redbook — Prison

- 1] Redbook  
nameless shapeless  
people  
who fill  
dreams amid  
labyrinths
- 2] Prison  
entombed  
minds starve  
pennyless  
eyes reflecting  
literary voids
- 3] Redbook  
amorphous gods  
shaping  
unseen  
minds.

Antibody positive

Silently entombed,  
they lay in wait,  
those who pursue me.

A PWA's cell

Through concrete jaws  
and teeth of steel  
he has passed.  
Within the beast's belly  
he does lie  
listless and alone.  
Moral monster, subtle  
and cruel where  
vicious men always rule.

Moral spiders

Society's spider web  
spun of moralism.  
Whims of righteousness  
guarded by the  
Socialite spider.  
fed ripened emotions  
entrapped by frenzied death.

Safe-Fun-Sex

Lain upon sheets of velvety silk  
like glistened embraced  
bodies.  
Rhythmic stroking: oiled shafts  
of throbbing engorged  
flesh.  
Tongue taunted nipples: rosy  
buds pink and  
hard.  
Caressing hips: slowly probing,  
fingers burrowing,  
deep inside.  
Quick finger thrust:  
hot ecstasy slowly  
erupts.

Seems to work every time

Seems to work every time;  
look at that loot  
in those short shorts!  
Bet you would love  
to cash in on the treasure  
hidden so very well.  
Set of plush round jewels,  
a heaven that always  
has a devastating toll,  
And a jaded head on top  
of a long, beautiful gem,  
ready for admiration.  
Show me your collection,  
I'll show you mine.  
Seems to work every time.

Chester Vinton Haas

B.P.G.

I may be black,  
but I am somebody  
and proud as hell of it.  
I may be poor,  
but unlike many of the rich,  
I can hold my head high  
'cause I'm a survivor.  
I may be Gay,  
but know for a fact  
that I am more of a man  
than many millions of others,  
because I live the life I love.

David 'Dee' Hoover



ooo Slightly bantering

Jean Genet: slightly bantering . . . brief and dirty

*Genet tells of being arrested, jailed and searched during  
which the police found a tube of vaseline that he used when  
making love...*

... I was in a cell. I knew that all night long my tube of  
vaseline would be exposed to the scorn of a group of  
strong, handsome, husky policemen. So strong that if the  
weakest of them barely squeezed two fingers together, there  
would shoot forth, first with a slight fart, brief and dirty, a  
ribbon of gum which would continue to emerge in a  
ridiculous silence. Nevertheless, I was sure that this puny  
and most humble object would hold its own against them;  
by its mere presence it would be able to exasperate all the  
police in the world; it would draw upon itself contempt,  
hatred, white and dumb rages. It would be slightly bantering  
— like a tragic hero amused at stirring up the wrath of the  
gods — indestructible, faithful to my happiness, and proud."

# Dykes to watch out for



## Youth

Continued from page 6

mation about AIDS epidemiology and methods of prevention.

Two recurring themes throughout the day were the special difficulties confronting young women and all teenagers of color. Many workshop facilitators mentioned that, just as women have traditionally shouldered the burden for birth control, they are now taking a disproportionate amount of responsibility for safer sex. Young women seeking intimacy and sensuality from boyfriends rather than intercourse may be pressured into high risk situations. Workshop speaker Liz Heron, a youth counselor connected with Harvard School of Education, addressed this problem, as well as confusion of young lesbians who are just becoming sexually active.

"There's such pressure to be heterosexual," Heron said, "that many women who identify as lesbian may also be having sex with men for social acceptability. So this cocky attitude that lesbians are the 'chosen people' immune from AIDS just isn't true. Circumstances vary, sexual behaviors vary — we must offer blunt information about sex and not rely on any stereotyped assumptions about lesbian sexuality."

Heron told an anecdote about a college woman who approached her in grief. In the midst of joyfully discovering a community of lesbian feminists, she was struck with the horror of AIDS: how could she be so happy about coming out when so many gay people were dying?

In a workshop on Race, Culture and Ethnicity, panelist Jose Parez from the Boston University School of Public Health explained that poverty and racism exacerbate the risk of AIDS for young people of color. He cited statistics indicating that over 50 percent of adolescents with AIDS in the United States come from Black and Latino communities. Like Rofes and Cranston, Parez stressed that peer education programs are essential for encouraging hopefulness and self-esteem so that kids will want to choose responsible sexuality.

In an aside of thanks to conference organizers, Parez praised the workshop title "Race, Culture and Ethnicity" as opposed to the usual word "minority." He explained, "It encourages a multi-cultural perspective, not an us-versus-them mentality. It acknowledges our differences and our pride

rather than pressuring us to assimilate."

Panelist Margarite Johnson, a social worker from the Roxbury Comprehensive Community Health Center, spoke about some differences in sexual development between Black and white teenagers. She sees Black youth as progressing faster to intercourse, with less consideration of future consequences.

"There's a sense of fragility among people of poverty," said Johnson. "AIDS is considered just another danger among many others, so it's hard to explain that AIDS prevention can be useful. For kids, we must reinforce a sense of hope, self-empowerment and personal aspiration. And AIDS information must be concrete."

Parez agreed, adding that, like women and gay men, people of color must control their own agendas. "Blacks and Latinos have been accused of being unreceptive in dealing with AIDS," he said. "But people of color have dealt with other health crises all along. Our incidence of stress-related disease is higher, and we do work to empower our communities."

The Youth and AIDS conference, a first in Massachusetts, packed a lot of content into one day. In a brief opening address, Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Health, Debra Prothrow-Stith, pledged the support and energies of her department in tackling the problem of adolescents and AIDS. Conference Coordinator Cranston praised her concern and thanked conference attendees for their efforts. Rofes, a former Bostonian, expressed less gratitude.

"I'm not all that impressed," he said during his keynote speech, "that you're here on a Saturday morning to address a topic as important as youth and AIDS. If we don't address this, we'll see an explosion of AIDS and ARC among kids. With a supposedly liberal governor, Massachusetts has done nothing for gay youth. It's a disgrace of the state schools and government."

Rofes quoted one of his favorite lines of poetry from Marilyn Hacker: "Would we be heroes if things came to it?"

"In 1987," said Rofes, "things have come to it. We must get past fear and change the status quo of how things happen. AIDS asks of us a heroism — please choose it." □

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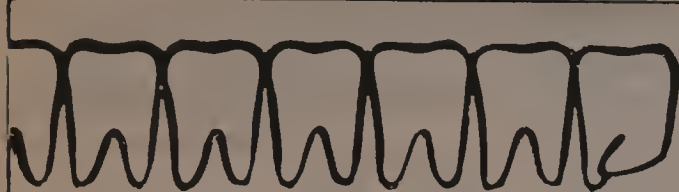
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Chloe Leamon, Jeremiah Kissel and Jenny Sterlin (L-R) in *Hay Fever*

## Bad manners

Gay playwright Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* is as fast and funny as it was in 1925

**Hay Fever.** Directed by Ronald Ritchell. With Ronald Ritchell, Paula Plum, Chloe Leamon, Jeremiah Kissel, Jenny Sterlin and Robert Bouffier. At the Lyric Stage, 54 Charles St., Boston. Through Nov. 29.

By Bill Kreidler

Since 1925 audiences have been roaring at Noel Coward's comedy of bad manners, *Hay Fever*. Many critics rate it among his very best, and Coward, who wrote the play in three days, admitted that it was his personal favorite. Even in 1987 it is easy to see why. *Hay Fever* is no period piece — it is still fast, funny and fresh.

*Hay Fever* chronicles a weekend with the theatrical and eccentric Bliss family, a family that includes an actress mother, a novelist father, and a daughter and son. Each family member invites, unbeknownst to the others, a weekend guest. The result is screw-ball comedy at its best as the guests attempt to cope with the various members of the Bliss family.

Underneath its light and silly exterior, *Hay Fever* deals with several themes that were innovations in English theater of the day, and remain timely now. The Blisses are, for the most part, sublimely unaware of what other people think. "We see things differently," says Simon Bliss. "And if people don't like it they can lump it." That talented people not from the upper class could

sometimes write their own rules and get away with just about anything — from unmitigated rudeness to a casual attitude toward sex — was a startling notion at the time.

Very gay is the sense of artifice that runs through the play. (Coward would almost certainly deny this.) The Bliss family members have "invented" themselves and they have a great deal of fun with their self-creations. The discomfort of their weekend guests (one a society woman, one a diplomat, one a flapper, and the last a hearty athlete) stems from the guests' lack of awareness of their own artificiality.

It is precisely because of this pervasive artifice that *Hay Fever* is the kind of comedy that can be easily ruined by actors who play too broadly or by timing that is off. The current Lyric Stage production is a most credible and competent production. The actors, for the most part, heighten their characterizations without going too far. Paula Plum and Ron Ritchell, who play two of the non-plussed guests, turn in particularly good performances, imbued with the subtle comic timing *Hay Fever* demands. Chloe Leamon, Jeremiah Kissel, Jenny Sterlin, and Robert Bouffier play the various members of the Bliss family without slipping into mugging or slapstick, both of which would be disastrous. In all, the Lyric Stage's *Hay Fever*, though weak in parts, is well-performed and highly entertaining. □

## Custody

Continued from page 1

tured him and that it did not affect his own sexuality; in fact the experience made him strong enough and mature enough to handle a very trying several years."

Sobel said the case proved "You can't catch homosexuality, which is the assumption that fundamentalists always seem to make." Batey, she said, is straight in the same way that many children of straight parents are gay. "Being gay is a matter of nature, not nurture, and the court recognized this important point," Sobel added.

Sobel agreed that the case is not a significant legal precedent, but warned that its importance should not be underestimated. Many people were educated about homosexuality and about AIDS, she said. "We educated the courts, we educated Brian's juvenile probation officers, and a lot of people in many different ways." Sobel added that the courts, like society, must undertake a "learning process about homosexuality," to break down stereotypes about people and about families. A number of states have seen an increase in custody cases involving gay men and lesbians, which can only contribute to this process, she said. Sobel added that she hoped these cases would pressure states to enact foster care policies which do not discriminate on the basis of sexuality.

Batey's mother's case was argued by lawyers from Concerned Women for America (CWA), a right-wing fundamentalist group financed by the Moral Majority. Lawyers for CWA filed an anti-gay brief in the Supreme Court sodomy case, *Bowers v. Hardwick* and are working on cases to cen-

sor "secular humanist" textbooks. According to Sobel, CWA promoted a tour by the mother to raise money for their cause. CWA, speculated Sobel, is also behind the decision not to appeal the case because they considered it both a lost cause and a rallying point for fundraising efforts. "Now they can point even to the courts as promoting homosexuality and stealing her son from her."

□ filed from Boston

## Available

Continued from back page

deal with what *they* thought we were asking them. (Sigh). Or stand alone through a song or two and try to look cool and available at the same time.

Frankly, I think cruising outside the bars may be even harder, though opportunities for conversation may be easier on line at a concert or at a festival. Then again, how many women go alone? Outside the explicitly social scenes there is always the old asker-friend or the friend of a friend, or friend of an ex method. You must have time or patience — and reliable sources — naturally.

There are no handkerchief colors left, to my knowledge. Otherwise...I'd suggest it. Flowers on the right or left ear are hardly part of the dyke aesthetic either. It would save a lot of trouble, you know, being able to tell who is single and/or available. (Surely dyke drama would be at an all time low [ha] if there were some agreed upon signals — for single and incapable of intimacy for example. Whoops, my cynicism *is* showing.)

In any case, cruising *is* a risky business. But it can be amusing and indeed, exhilarating. For those considering embarking on the scene or interested in brushing up techniques of "telling" who's what, I suggest the following self-quiz for starters. Because, to be blunt, how you "tell" depends a lot on who/what you are and who/what you're after....

## The Acu(wo)men quiz

I'd describe myself as:

- single, period
- single and looking (for a good time, not a relationship)
- single and looking for a relationship (but I'll have a good time, too)
- single, celibate, and looking for a lover/someone special
- unattached (coy)
- attached, period
- attached and enjoying the scenery (she'd get upset if I said looking)
- attached, looking and "open to persuasion"
- attached, unsatisfied and considering the options
- single and desperate
- attached and desperate
- ambivalent across the board
- other or some combination of the above

If I saw a very attractive woman in the bookstore who was looking over the contents of **Lesbian Sex**, I would figure (based on my wealth of experience and state of mind) that:

- she's definitely single as well as hot (I would then edge closer and try to think of something witty and/or salacious to say)
- she's definitely in a couple and looking for new ideas
- ditto and undersexed
- I need to get closer to see what section she's perusing and go from there
- she's unapproachable (I mean, what would I say?)
- I'll watch to see if she buys it, *then* follow her
- I'd better leave before I do something I'll regret
- this will be great fantasy material for later (what does she look like in bed/what does her lover look like, what do they do?)
- other (silly)

If I'm at the bar and a woman walks in alone, goes to a vacant area, arranges herself over the railing and meets my eyes, I would:

- look away and blush
- thank the goddess I don't blush and gulp as I stare back
- go buy a beer and/or find my friends and/or light a cigarette
- ask her to dance (checking first to see if she has a coat on!)
- look around to see if my lover is within range
- look behind me to see who she's looking at anyway
- leave the bar

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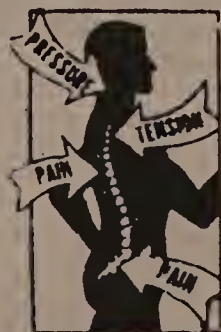
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**ON OUR BACKS,** the sexual entertainment magazine for lesbians, is 48 pages of erotic fiction, features, plus timely sexual advice and news columns. We are quarterly, national, unique and provocative. \$15/yr sub or \$5 current issue to: On Our Backs, PO Box 421916, San Francisco, CA 94142. (ex)

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I'm requesting to receive your newspaper and also a female penpal on the outside, because this place doesn't allow us to write other prisoners. Thank you. Sherrell MORTON, 7390, Box 180, Muncy PA 17756.

I'm a transsexual, honey chocolate cinnamon brown, Very beautiful and fancy free. However, I'm lonely, looking for a penpal. My hobbies are fashion, topless dancing and one-to-one friendship. Michelle TURNER, 2-B, 40 S. Alabama St., Indianapolis IN 46204.



### GCN Prisoners!!!

At some point in December, the paper will stop coming to those of you who haven't responded to my letter asking if you're still getting it.

If you haven't seen the letter, maybe they have thrown it away ...

SO

write me anyway (smile), if you're getting it and want to keep it that way. (NOW!) (please) (thanks) (Mike)

One of GCN's long-time prisoner friends and a source of much Jailhouse Lawyer help is in need of an old tenor sax (Selman or Conn?). If someone out there has any ideas (or a tenor in the attic!) please let Mike know at GCN. THANX!

## Prisoners Seeking Friends



TO ALL THOSE, IN & OUT OF PRISON,  
WHO FIGHT AGAINST THEIR BONDAGE.  
Alexander Berkman, *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*

### Prisoner-friends,

Letters are POURING in here in response to my yearly letter to see if everyone is still getting GCN, (Remember: write by Nov. 30!) AND

I'm going away for a few weeks ... SO, some of your letters and other concerns will be later-than-usual in getting attention.

PLEASE BE PATIENT. (I'm doing my best to keep up!) Later, Mike.



Looking for sincere friends and a possible relationship. Please feel free to write. Hobbies in here include basketball, photography and swimming. Michael WILLIAMS, 422740, Rt 4 Box 1100, Rosharon TX 77583

Seeking penpal. I like cooking, outdoors, people and nights with that one and only. Would especially like to write black gay men, but will write all. John LOWE, 09194-074, Box 1000, State Unit, Butler NC 27509.

Need someone out there to send letters and be a penpal in this hard time. No money. Age not important, but longtime writing friendship desired. Frank WADE, C-064304 (P/C 5), 500 Orange Ave. Circle, Belle Glades FL 33430

INDIANER COMMUNE (for young people in Nuremburg W. Germany) seeks punks, anarchists, and other comrades to type, copy and help distribute radical literature in the US. For more info write: R.G. LAWLER, 157-587, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699. (Please write only if you can correspond with prisoners.)

### Centerspread POETS & ARTISTS

David Emerson Rezabek,  
Box 900, 34034, Jefferson City MO 65102  
David D. Ferrand.  
A-025036, 700 Conley Lake Rd, Deer Lodge MT 59722  
Cassandra Hynes,  
0362W, 2605 State St, Salem OR 97310  
Adrienne Gannon, (released)  
N.T. Kallenberg, (released)  
Timothy Scaggs,  
119050 ACC, Box 1000, Craigsville VA 24430  
Thomas Lee Butler,  
389367, Rt 2 Box 20, Midway, TX 75852  
Traci 'Passion' Cook,  
18806, 1479 Collins Ave, Marysville OH 43040  
Mason 'Vanna' Vandiver,  
35361, Box 900, Jefferson City MO 65102  
Lamont Patterson,  
P-8781, Drawer R, Huntingdon, PA 16652  
Vincent Maulsby,  
Y-4424, Box 244, Graterford, PA 19426  
Chester Vinton Haas,  
327322A, Wynne, Huntsville TX 77349  
David 'Dee' Hoover,  
73A 875, Box 618, 135 State St, Auburn NY 13024  
Charlie Willis,  
333526, Ellis 2, Huntsville TX 77340  
Tommy Blankenship,  
195-152, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699



THANK YOU, GEORGE OF SC!!! (from Tim)

Black Viet Nam vet would like to hear from anyone who'd care to write. I love music, movies, sports, poems, and a host of other things which I'll share with those who write. Charles CLARK, 182645, Box 57, Marion OH 43302.

Society abandoned me for my beliefs in intergenerational relationships. If you believe we all should be able to love who we choose, please be a penpal and let me have a little moral support. Thank you. Ricky MOULDER, 15371-077 Unit 7, Box 1000, Seagoville TX 75159

Pretty, pink and passionate. I'm a TV and my drag name is Brenda. For sweet, sexy and seductive letters write Brett MASSEY, 353593, Box 128, Tennessee Colony TX 75861.

Black gay male seeking serious friendship (relationship?). Hung and lonesome as hell. Please write. Ray TANN, Box 137, Tillery NC 27887  
31 yr old gay man in prison for sex with teenagers. Would like penpals who understand. Have 70 years to do. Ricky Lee GRAY, 138336, Box 500, Boydton VA 23917.



Fem seeks correspondence with masculine man. Photos welcome but not necessary. I'm an old-fashioned type queen. Paul EVERSON, 090563 (MB-1584), Box 1100, Avon Park FL 33825

I'm Black, 25, not bad looking, and looking for friendship and open for more if it happens. Alphonso CAMPBELL, 14501, 3405 Deer Park Dr SE, Salem OR 97310.

Sincere bi-male seeks letters from TV, TS and effeminate males for friendship. No head games. Photo appreciated. Edward CREAGH, 56915, U/25, Parchman MS 38738

'Political prisoner', woodsculptor, needs friend to correspond with, especially if you are looking for a sincere, affectionate 'mare'. I'm moving to BOSTON when released. Please write. Edward AESCH, B063020 (EA 34), Box 500, Olustee FL 32072.

30 yrs old, lots of body hair, large hairy balls, etc. would love to hear from gay men, TVs, TSs, etc. David RIFE, 198443, Box 740, London OH 43140

Black female impersonator, 30, smooth body, like to party and play handball, into reading, writing and meeting people. Please get in touch. D. R. ROSS, 150217, Box 900, Jefferson City MO 65102.

Masc. gay male seeking friends to write, inside or out. Interests include weightlifting, rock music, and parties. Am financially stable. Please write this Californian stuck in the midwest. R. SCOTT, 33921, Box 1568, Hutchinson KS 67504.

Half Italian, half Black bisexual male seeking freeworld people to write. No \$\$s. Photos appreciated though. Would like to share fantasies and problems (and whatever). Anthony RID-DICK, Box 4970 (5-D), Orlando FL 32802.

I'm into rock music, reading and ending this loneliness in here. Please help me. I'm not butch or fem, just gay. Dewey COLEMAN, 11747, 700 Conley Lake Rd, Deer Lodge MT 59722.



BUILDING MORE PRISONS TO CURE "CRIME" IS LIKE BUILDING MORE TOILETS TO CURE DIARRHEA...



# Calendar

14 SATURDAY TO  
22 SUNDAY

20 Friday ☐ **Bright Morning Star** in concert at Paine Hall, Harvard Campus. 8pm. \$8.00 in advance/\$9.50 at door. Info: 497-5611.



## 14 Saturday

**Waltham** ☐ **Brandeis Triskelion Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Coalition dance.** Schwartz Auditorium, Brandeis University. 10pm-2am. Info: 736-4761 or 893-4667.

**Boston** ☐ **Project PLACE training** for persons interested in working with Mutual Help Group. Weekly for six weeks. 32 Rutland St. Info: 262-3740.

**Northampton** ☐ Albion Bookshop Cafe presents its **Autumn 1987 women's reading series** with **Jyl Felman** and **Judith McDaniel**. Third floor, Northampton Center for the Arts, 17 New South St. 4-6pm. Sliding scale donation requested. Info: Leslea Newman, 584-3865 or Lisa Hahn, 586-7440.

**Keene, NH** ☐ **AIDS Update '87** presented by Monadnock Area Womyn/Monadnock Area Gay Men. Keene Unitarian Universalist Church, 69 Washington St. 9am-4pm. \$5. Info: (603) 357-5544.

**Northampton** ☐ New Moon Productions and **Smith College Lesbian Alliance** potluck dinner, concert by Debbie Fier and a dance to top it off. 5:30pm-1am. Info: (413) 586-8718.

**Amherst** ☐ **Underground Railway Theater** tour of "Sanctuary: The Spirit of Harriet Tubman" and "Are You Ready My Sister?" UMass/Amherst. Info: (413) 545-1945.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Moving Violations** women-only motorcycle club 3rd annual dance party. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8pm-midnight. Alcohol free. \$4. Info: 391-5940.

**Cambridge** ☐ Massachusetts **National Organization for Women** annual state conference. Through November 15. Howard Johnson Motel, 777 Memorial Drive. \$20, with sliding scale available. Info: 782-3241.

## 15 Sunday

**Boston** ☐ **Mixed Media by 4 women artists**, coordinated by Holly Jaynes. Student Gallery, Tower Building, Massachusetts College of Art. Through November 21.

**Jamaica Plain** ☐ **Lesbin and Gay Neighbors** Arboretum walk and get-together. Rain or shine, meet at 1pm. Info: 469-9841.

**Brookline** ☐ **Brookline-Brighton-Allston lesbian potluck.** Bring food and pictures of the March on Washington. Info: 735-0403.

**Portland, ME** ☐ Paintings in oil, exhibit by **Alison M. Mierzykowski**. Entre-nous, 117 Spring St. 4-6pm.

**Boston** ☐ "Personal Politics: A Radical America Forum on **Sexuality, Politics and Communities in the Age of AIDS.**" Speakers include Sue Hyde, Evelyn Hammonds, Joe Interrante, ACT UP, and Cindy Patton. Roxbury Community College, 625 Huntington Ave. 12-5pm. \$2 donation. Info: 628-6585.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Becky Birtha** reads from her new book, **Lover's Choice**. New Words Bookstore, 186 Hampshire. 3-5pm. Free. Info: 876-5310.

**Cambridge** ☐ Author **Toni Cade Bambara** reads in the Readings by Women Writers series. Sponsored by the MIT's Women's Studies program and the Writing Program. Rm. 10-250, 77 Mass. Ave. 8pm. Info: 253-8844.

## 16 Monday

**Boston** ☐ **Demonstration** against anti-lesbian/gay rights editorials and inaction of the Catholic Church in the AIDS epidemic at the office of **The Pilot**, the official newspaper of the Boston Catholic Archdiocese. 49 Franklin St. 4:30-6pm.

**Boston** ☐ **"Confronting AIDS: Who Gets it and How?"** Joan Goldberg, AIDS coordinator, Harvard Community Health Plan. Boston Center for Adult Education, 5 Commonwealth Ave. Info: 267-4430.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Lesbian parents and co-parents rap.** DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8pm. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

## 17 Tuesday

**Boston** ☐ **Healing Service for all those affected by AIDS.** Church of St. John the Evangelist. 35 Bowdoin St., Beacon Hill. Info: 227-5242.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Open discussion for lesbians.** DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8pm. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

**Boston** ☐ **Speak out against poverty** on the State House steps. 12noon. Info: 426-9026.

**Boston** ☐ General meeting of the **Boston Center for Lesbians and Gay Men.** Boston City Hall, rm. 801 (Congress St. entrance). 7:30pm. Info: 522-2165.

**Boston** ☐ **Neighborhood Human Services meeting** with the Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services. South End/Chinatown/Back Bay/Fenway/Beacon Hill. Harriet Tubman House, 566 Columbus Ave. 7-9pm. Info: 720-4300 x320.

## 18 Wednesday

**Northampton** ☐ **Gay Film Festival** through November 24. Pleasant St. Theatre. Call for titles and times. Info: (413) 584-9338.

**Cambridge** ☐ National March for Lesbian and Gay Rights, one month later: its affect on people's lives and community politics on **"Say it Sister!"** WMBR, 88.1FM, 7-8pm.

**Boston** ☐ **"Portraits From Outside,"** works by Mr. Imagination, Mose Tolliver, Lee Godie and David Finn. North Hall Gallery, Mass. College of Art, 621 Huntington Ave. Through December 21. M-F 10-6, Sat. 11-5.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Lesbians older/younger.** DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8pm. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

## 19 Thursday

**Boston** ☐ **Neighborhood Human Service Meeting** for Charlestown, North End and Downtown. Kent-Charlestown Community School, 254 Medford St. 7-9pm. Info: 720-4300 x320.

**Boston** ☐ **GCN's production night.** All welcome. Proofreading: before 8PM. Paste-up: after 7PM. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington & Back Bay T-stops. GCN: 426-4469.

**Boston** ☐ **Mass. Lesbian and Gay Bar Association** and the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders reception for lesbian and gay law students. Offices of David Lund, 529 Newbury St., Kenmore Square. 7:30pm. Info: 426-1350.

**Provincetown** ☐ Performance of Ronald Harwood's **"The Dresser"** to benefit the Provincetown AIDS Support Group. Provincetown Art Association, 460 Commercial St. 8pm. \$15. Info and reservations: 487-2400.

**Boston** ☐ **Sharon McNight** performs at Club Cabaret. Thursday through Sunday, 10pm and midnight. \$6 Thursday and Sunday/\$8 Friday and Saturday. **Ten Percent Review**, through Dec. 6. 7:30pm. November 19 show, \$15 benefit for the **AIDS Action Committee**; all other shows \$12, Tuesday through Thursday and Sunday/\$14 Friday and Saturday. Club Cafe, 209 Columbus Ave. Info and reservations: 536-0972.

## 20 Friday

**Cape Cod** ☐ **"Knowing Ourselves, Knowing Others,"** a three-day residential workshop for gay men to clarify personal and inter-personal relationships. Through November 22. \$250 including room and board. Info: Francis Giambrone, 628-6988.

**Boston** ☐ **Jay Leno** benefit performance for the **AIDS Action Committee.** Symphony Hall, Mass. Ave. 10:30pm. \$26, \$28 and \$30. Tickets available from Symphony Hall Box Office, Bostix, Ticketron, Teletron and Strawberries.

**Boston** ☐ **GCN mailing.** Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5pm to 10pm. Near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 426-4469.

**Boston** ☐ **Songs of South America**, first annual Thanksgiving Concert. Benefit for Little Brothers — Friends of the Elderly. Villa Victoria Cultural Center, 85 W. Newton St. 8pm. \$10. Info: 776-1569.

**Boston** ☐ **"Moving Beyond the Medical Model: AIDS and Strategies for Community Empowerment."** A dialogue for social workers, therapists, researchers, educators and community workers. Sponsored by the Association for the Development of Social Therapy. Room 205-A, Roxbury Community College, 625 Huntington Ave. 7:30pm. \$5 members/\$10 non-members. Info: 524-7710.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Bright Morning Star** in concert at Paine Hall, Harvard Campus. Benefit for Bread and Roses Center for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence in New England. 8pm. \$8 advance/\$9.50 door. Tickets at New Words, Red Book, Glad Day. Info: 497-5611.

## 21 Saturday

**Boston** ☐ **"Beyond the March: Acting Out and Moving On!"** Community meeting to plan further actions, sponsored by the Massachusetts Lesbian and Gay March on Washington Organizing Committee. Piemonte Room, Boston City Hall, fifth floor. 1-5pm.

**Jamaica Plain** ☐ **"Sexuality: Are You Developing Yours?"** Workshop led by Gwen Lowenheim and Mary Fridley of the Boston Institute for Social Therapy and Research. 670 Centre St. 2-5pm. \$10 for members. Info: 524-7710.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Lesbian singles** discussion and social hour. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8pm. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

**Boston** ☐ Boston Area **Women's Self-Defense** Collective 4-week women's self-defense course. \$40, with a limited number of scholarships available. Info: 574-9433.

**Northampton** ☐ **"BurLEZk...Live!"** Video of the BurLEZk Cabaret of lesbian strip-tease, showing at the New Alexandria Lesbian Library. 7pm. \$4. Info and directions: (413) 584-7616.

**Boston** ☐ **Chiltern Mt. Club** annual meeting. Sports workshops, noon-5pm; potluck supper and slide extravaganza 5-10pm. A.M.C. Cabot Hall, 5 Joy St. Non-members welcome. Info: Michael, 787-0428 or Betsy 899-1606.

**Boston** ☐ **"Being gay; Getting gray"** — a presentation/discussion sponsored by Prime Timers, an organization for older gay men. Revere Room, Lindemann Health Center, 25 Staniford St. 2-4pm. All older gay males welcome. Info: write Box 352, Reading, MA 01867.

## 22 Sunday

**Boston** ☐ **"Let's Twist Again!" Chubby Checker Live** for the **AIDS Action Committee.** The NYC Jukebox, 275 Tremont St. 8pm. \$25 adv./\$30 at door/\$75 for 'Fat Cats' including special 'June Cleaver' dinner before at Club Cafe with hot rod limo service to party." Tickets available at Club Cafe, Juke Box, Bostix, Copley Flair, Odeon.

**Cambridge** ☐ **DOB Thanksgiving turkey dinner.** 6pm, Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$7 members/\$8 other women. \$3 for children 10 and under. Veggie dishes available. Info: 661-3633.

**Cambridge** ☐ Benefit screening for Women Outdoors of **"Annapurna: A Woman's Place"** and "Marathon Woman." Cambridge YWCA, 7 Temple St. Show times: 2:30, 5:00 and 7:30pm. \$5-\$8. Info: 566-2558.

CALENDAR COMPILED BY  
BARNABY FISHER

So you're at the bar, maybe a new one. Or you're on vacation. Or it's a women's concert. You're engaging in the proverbial sightseeing...watching the obvious duos, the women who are alone or seem alone, the women hanging out with friends....But *are* they friends? Or ex's? Or an affinity group or — What's a dyke to do? Who is single or — more accurately — *available* out there anyway? How do you tell?

Some of us are brave. You know, the types who walk up and ask a woman to dance even though she is standing with someone or (really brave) a group. As long as she's not kissing the woman next to her in the concert line or the checkout lane she's fair game.

But for those of us who need more information before we make the move it's not that easy. Determining a woman's availability out and about in the lesbian community (I'm not about to touch the-rest-of-the-world, thank you) is tremendously complex. It can take years of practice — not to mention guts, good observational skills, some listening ability (particularly re: the dykevine) and perhaps most of all instinct and luck. Sometimes I do wish there was a short-cut method, a sign to look for, anywhere, anytime, to (um) assist us in reaching our decisions, or at least figuring out our lines of fire.

What do dykes watch out for? To begin with, here are some pretty clear indicators that one should look elsewhere:

- Rings — left or right wedding bands (unless you enjoy "the challenge" or self/other-destructiveness)

- Body Language — joined-at-the-hippers; deep throaters; chained (with some notable exceptions)

- Clothing — women who wear coats in bars (unless they're leather or it's subzero) — aren't they signalling they don't dance?

We don't however, want to be too quick to make assumptions. For example, when two women are six feet apart on the dance floor, are they: a) on their first date and don't want to give the "wrong impression?" b) dykes who don't know each other at all but like the song/are horny? c) lovers having a fight or "maintaining a distance" because they have to work tomorrow (etc.)? d) ex-

## Is she or isn't she? (available, that is)

*Helpful hints for the woman on the make  
(Plus: why we must avoid dykes who wear coats in bars)*

By Marea Murray



lovers afraid of making *anyone* nervous? e) friends showing the world that's *all* they are? or f) "leaf-dancers" who need that much space!

Within three feet gets really tricky. A lot depends on eye contact (as above). They could be a) "interested parties" unsure of who'll make the first move; b) *close* friends; c) lovers enjoying looking; d) lovers teasing each other; e) "leaf dancers" who "need space but are, like, connected." Or f) the dance floor could be wall-to-wall.

Huggers are really tough. Is there *any* space between their bodies? Are they "hands-on" women? Do they "hug" for over two minutes thus crossing the boundary between friendly acquaintances and variously sensualists? future lovers? fire testers? Is one so drunk or tired the other is holding her up or is it a slow dance? How fast is the music? These are essential questions for the curious cruiser.

I know friends who slow dance. Of course, there are consequences. Decreased perceived availability is a drag (unless you want it that way). One of my roommates and I danced so often together we joked about wearing shirts reading "single & live together," but figured "just roomies" might be less confusing. Since we were both "getting attached" at the time, we laughed it off more than anything else. At least we didn't have to ask someone to dance and

Continued on page 12

An anniversary party not to be missed!  
Laugh, Dance, Rap  
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BY MAIL: Send check or money order to Bread and Roses, E.D.S., 99 Brattle Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

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